



European Daily

EUROPE'S DAILY NEWSPAPER

PREVIEW EDITION

WEDNESDAY JUNE 15 2011

EUROPEANDAILY.COM

A daily newspaper for Europe

The daily newspaper is the mirror in which a society sees itself. It sets the agenda, gives common points of reference and provides a forum for debate about issues that matter to all. Reading the newspaper together with the morning coffee might seem a trivial daily routine, but it is one of the pillars of a truly vibrant and democratic society. PAGE 2

EUROPE

Generation Facebook rages against crisis

Los indignados, the Spanish protest movement that has inspired similar action groups across Europe, has abandoned the Puerta del Sol square in Madrid. But the protestors have vowed not to back down, and have withdrawn from the streets to take their fight online. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter played a crucial role in gathering support for the movement. And *los indignados* will need to make use of these networks if it is to maintain its political force, something that – without the rallying point of the Sol square is far from certain. PAGE 3

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ABROAD

Republicans face off in New Hampshire

Seven hopefuls took part in the largest Republican debate so far, with less than a year and a half to go until the US presidential election. As expected, the contenders took to criticising the Obama administration, predominantly the president's performance on the economy, an issue expected to dominate in 2012. Several candidates assured the audience that the US was capable of economic growth matching that of surging economies. Of the seven candidates that took to the stage in New Hampshire, only a couple are considered likely to be able to beat Obama. PAGE 6

ABROAD

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ABROAD

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Tatiana De Rosnay



is currently Europe's bestselling author, according to a survey of national bestselling lists conducted by industry analyst Ruediger Wischenbart. De Rosnay has a suitably mixed background for Europe's No. 1 author. Her father is the French scientist Joël de Rosnay, son of the painter Gaëtan de Rosnay, while her paternal great-grandmother was Russian actress Natalia Rachewskia, director of Leningrad's famous Pushkin Theatre. Her mother is Stella Jebb, daughter of British diplomat Gladwyn Jebb, while her great-great-grandfather is the British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

European Daily

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ALESSIA PIERDOMENICO/REUTERS

Silvio Berlusconi has recently experienced several political setbacks.

Meltdown for Berlusconi as voters say no, 4 times

Italians have decisively rejected plans to restart the country's nuclear programme in a landmark vote that could mark a turning point in Europe's relationship with atomic energy.

ANDREW OSBORN

In a referendum that also dealt a serious blow to the political fortunes of Silvio Berlusconi, Italy's beleaguered prime minister, more than 94 per cent of voters said they were strongly opposed to controversial plans to build new nuclear reactors in a country that currently has none.

The idea to revive nuclear power generation was a key plank in Mr Berlusconi's political programme, but one that even he had to concede had been resolutely rejected.

"We must probably say goodbye to the possibility of nuclear power stations and we must strongly commit ourselves to

renewable energy," Mr Berlusconi said as the results became clear on Monday evening. Italy abandoned nuclear power in 1987, a year after the devastating Chernobyl atomic disaster in the then Soviet Union, and shut its last nuclear reactor down in 1990.

But Mr Berlusconi was an enthusiastic backer of a plan to restart the mothballed programme, wanting Italy to meet as much as one quarter of its power needs with nuclear energy by 2020. Heavily dependent on imported gas from Russia, the Italian prime minister had argued that embracing nuclear power could help Italy lower

soaring electricity costs, while bolstering its energy security.

With his moral authority badly tarnished by a series of sex scandals (Mr Berlusconi is currently a defendant in three separate trials involving allegations of bribery, fraud, abuse of power and paying for sex with a 17-year-old girl), jaded voters seemed unusually determined to punish him at the ballot box,

Anti-nuclear campaigners believe the Italian vote could have far-reaching implications

and clearly had no appetite for a nuclear future.

Coming just weeks after he and his centre-right political allies took a beating in local elections, the nuclear vote, which was one of four questions

put to Italians in a jumbo referendum, is the latest sign that the 74-year-old media tycoon-turned-politician is losing his battle for political survival.

Most political analysts inside Italy believe that it is now a question of when, and not if, he will be forced to step down, while conceding that the final act could take a while to play out. Yet anti-nuclear campaigners believe the Italian vote could have far-reaching implications that go well beyond Italy's turbulent domestic political scene. In particular, they say it could prompt other European countries to turn

their back on nuclear power, accelerating a pan-European move away from a source of energy that is weathering its worst public relations crisis in a quarter of a century.

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"I don't think it's possible to get people to return. Unless they create jobs and increase the living standards, people will keep leaving." EUROPE 4

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P E R S P E C T I V E

European Daily Europe's daily newspaper

The daily newspaper is the mirror in which a society sees itself. It sets the agenda, gives common points of reference and provides a forum for debate about issues that matter to all. Reading the newspaper together with the morning coffee might seem a trivial daily routine, but it is one of the pillars of a truly vibrant and democratic society.

Three years ago we started on a journey to create a daily newspaper for Europe. We have published this preview edition to show our concept in a tangible form. We are distributing 40 000 copies across Europe to ask the question: "isn't it time for a European daily newspaper?" To make it happen we need an answer from you, our potential reader. We also need more partners and the necessary capital. Our intention is to publish on a daily basis – in print, on mobile devices and online.

Over the past decades, momentous events have reshaped Europe's political, economic and social landscape. Millions of people now live in a European country other than their own. Many Europeans regularly cross borders to work, study or simply for vacation.

We share the same political institutions,

“Without common points of reference, Europeans talk past each other

often carry the same money in our pockets and, increasingly, rely on English as a common language. These are all features of our daily lives. European society is a reality, whether people feel European or not.

Yet, strangely, daily news is still largely covered from national perspectives. Events, developments and opinions are seen through national lenses and feed into separate narratives. State borders no longer prevent us from moving around the continent freely, but they still manage to isolate debates and hold back the free flow of ideas and arguments. Meanwhile, many important issues are decided at the European level, from how we run our economies to the food we eat.

Without common points of reference, Europeans talk past each other. Daily news reporting and analysis demands a European perspective. For us, that means untangling complex issues and bringing them into a wider context to show how they impact on the everyday life of Europeans, whether they live in Lisbon or Helsinki. We believe that this can be provided by a European daily newspaper.

Just over 20 years ago, a bewildered Europe awoke from the long night of the Cold War. A united Europe was then just an abstract vision, the domain of diplomats and statesmen. Today, Europe is still searching for its shape and purpose. Yet it has become reality for hundreds of millions of people. It is a fact of everyday life.

Now we need intelligent and independent journalism that gives form to Europe by analysing, debating and criticising issues from a European perspective. This will be our mission, our duty and our privilege.

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Special thanks to Frank Schwalba-Hoth, Indrek Tarand, Michael Ghilissen, Julien Pourel, Brussels Press Club Europe, the Brussels Office, Alice Production. Printed in 40 000 copies at the Eco Print Centre in Belgium.
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Let's talk to each other

There is no newspaper that Europeans can turn to for news and debate, says Jacek Zakowski

JACEK ŻAKOWSKI

Fuelled by Europe's fear of itself and the hope that economic growth would end political tensions, Europe's integration has been managed behind closed doors for over half a century.

Over time, a shallow myth of a European identity with Christian roots and a common history gained the upper hand. This intellectual construction worked well enough to grease the wheels of European cooperation as far as steel and sugar were concerned (although fish always proved a little more problematic).

It has been far more difficult to deal with issues of taxes, healthcare, security, environment and migration. Differences across Europe often seem more important than the very things that are supposed to unite us.

If a truly democratic and functional Europe is the goal, we must present this vision to Europeans in a straightforward and understandable manner. Otherwise politicians will bow to social pressure and fail to lead; uninformed voters and politicking will undermine any steps toward genu-

ine European integration. The disastrous infighting over the EU constitution is just one example. It should be clear to all that any real move forward now needs an accessible European public space for informed debate.

What would a platform for debate that links half a billion people look like? At the end of the Second World War, calls for a strong Western identity were answered by the *The Herald Tribune*, an American newspaper, which came to serve as a link between the Old World and the New.

Europe has changed dramatically since post-war recovery. It has developed into a key player in world politics, a fact that its media have failed to notice; Brussels is covered in the "Abroad" section of national European newspapers along with Sydney and Kuala Lumpur. And this at a time when most European governments no longer deal with their European counterparts through 'foreign' ministries, but have ministers with dedicated European portfolios.

We have European coins and



notes, European elections and we move about freely, but we have no truly European media and no distinct European public opinion.

Both public and private actors have tried to address this problem, but significant improvement will remain out of reach unless European media gains broad public support.

This is not an easy task. The range of languages spoken and the power of national divisions make it hard to create pan-European mass media that can reach many Europeans on a daily basis. Yet, on the other side of the Atlantic only a fraction of Americans read *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Both newspapers, however, play a prominent role in

setting the agenda for public debate.

It is also wrong to assume that the diversity of languages on the European continent hinders the emergence of pan-European media. There is one increasingly common language – English. Everything indicates that the use of English will become more widespread while causing no harm to national identity or the rich fabric of European languages.

This makes the creation of pan-European media not only necessary, but also possible. It must be done. •

Jacek Zakowski is co-founder of Gazeta Wyborcza and journalist at the Polityka news magazine.

Comments on the European Daily



I would like to offer my sincere best wishes to the European Daily. It is a source of great strength that Europe enjoys the perspectives and cultural offerings of so many countries and languages. That diversity is stronger when Europeans come together in a shared public sphere. We see these benefits in the work of the European Union institutions and it is critical that there are media forums of similar ambition and openness. Our future prosperity and social harmony depend upon us understanding, shaping and adapting to the fast-changing world around us. The energy and entrepreneurialism so evident in the European Daily, is an inspiration to all those looking for new insights into our world and Europe's role in it. I hope only that this great European endeavour goes from strength to strength.

– José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission



I support the establishment of the European Daily not only because I believe in the future of the European Union, but also because I myself once proposed setting up a daily paper for our central European region. Even though my suggestion was unsuccessful in the end, this confirms, years afterwards, that my idea was right. If I share with other Europeans the need for a transnational daily newspaper, it's probably because I share with them the idea of all-European unification.

– Václav Havel, former President of the Czech Republic



Independent media reporting about Europe is an important cornerstone of well-informed European public discourse. However, there is still a long way to go until there is a true European media landscape. The European Commission is currently looking into ways to further strengthen information on European affairs, characterised by independent, professional and high-quality reporting. The European Daily should play an important role in helping citizens obtain valuable information and enrich ongoing debates. I wish you a good start.

– Viviane Reding, Vice President of the European Commission



In a time of constant changes and challenges it is important to encourage European citizens to foster a 'European Identity' based on our common values. In order to build a peaceful European society, people overcame borders – an example the media should follow. Therefore I am happy that the European Daily took the role of a pioneer and I wish the team all the best for this project.

– Hans-Gert Pötering, former President of the European Parliament



This is an excellent initiative, which I endorse. The European Daily will be a key player in the world of bringing high quality, accurate and European news to citizens including from the increasingly important European Parliament. I welcome the idea of having both an on-line and a print edition.

– Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament



I congratulate the European Daily team for making this contribution to Europe. Many have been waiting for this, myself included, and I believe that this publication can play an important role in bringing Europeans together around shared values and views.

– Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Co-President of the European Greens



The creation of a new media outlet dedicated to Europe is excellent news, especially since it is an initiative by young Europeans. A project such as the European Daily can help make Europe more tangible and closer to the citizens.

– Wilfried Martens, President of the European People's Party

Generation Facebook rages against crisis

A grass-roots movement that took over Spain's most emblematic square Puerta del Sol, defying authorities to set up a Utopian mini village for a month, voluntarily packed up this week. However, it says its fight to change the political and economic system is just beginning.

SARAH MORRIS

The protesters who called themselves the indignants say they are taking their struggle away from central Sol to local neighbourhoods – where they will hold general assemblies to debate proposals for change – as well as roving camps and demonstrations.

At the start of the week, about 40 dissenters remained behind, but the rest had left as they agreed in a general assembly, leaving just an information point on the square.

Organisers said they would continue to run virtual assemblies on the internet. Unlike previous demonstrations in Spain, called by political parties or the unions, los indignados grew from a handful of disaffected young people to tens of thousands through the use of social networks like Twitter and Facebook.

"This is a new form of political participation," said Jaime Pastor, a teacher of political science at the Spanish university of distance learning UNED. "It's unconventional and it questions the traditional modes of participation which it considers have been affected by political corruption."

Started on 15 May, the movement named *M15* after that date, completely overshadowed political campaigning in the run-up to the country's local elections, with up to 30 000 defying a ban by the electoral commission against rallying in Sol the day ahead of voting.

Protesters railed against political corruption and a proportional representation system that tends to divide power

between the socialists and the conservatives.

Pastor says with general elections scheduled for March, if not called earlier, los indignados will remain an important political force.

Although in a far different context, its organisation has similarities to the Arab uprisings where social networks were able to pass messages rapidly to like-minded strangers.

Some analysts, however, think that without the focus of Sol the movement will now wither and die unless its supporters embrace the representative democracy they reject.

"The assembly model they present is not the best exercise of political participation possible," said Ricardo Montoro, a sociology professor at the Autonoma University in Madrid. "It's 24 centuries old and invented by the Athenians and is designed for small populaces. Representative democracy is the best model to reflect the sovereignty of the people, by choosing representatives for a set time."

What the movement calls *Real Democracy* – hours of debating on public squares – is a contradiction in terms, believes Montoro.

"What right have they got to occupy public space, by what rules do they prevent other people from using that public space?" he asked. "That space doesn't belong to the campers; it's the people who have the right to it and a minority should never impose itself above a majority."

Since leaving Sol, smaller



Spanish protestors clash with police near the Puerta del Sol Square in Madrid

groups have held rallies in central Madrid, massing outside the country's parliament against the ruling Socialist government's bill to make the Spain's collective bargaining agreements more flexible for companies. More than 100 general assemblies have sprung up around the city centre.

In twenty European countries in more than a dozen languages, including Arabic, English, Portuguese and Greek, the protesters are calling a global demonstration next Sunday, 19 June.

"Sol was symbolic," said Javier Prieto, a 23-year-old graphic design student who was one of the thousands that rallied on the square night after night for 25 days. Hundreds permanently camped out in tents or beneath giant improvised tarpaulin structures. "It was about waking people up, starting people's brains working, now the movement will evolve and expand."

Copied around Spain, the Sol protests inspired some indignants in Portugal and Greece to mount similar peaceful camps

against the austerity imposed by IMF-EU bailouts.

Driven by young organisers on social networks, the movement has attracted people of all ages; anarchists, hippies, students and middle-class professionals. Like many in the movement, Prieto thinks Europe's sovereign debt crisis is the fallout of bankers and regulators that mismanaged the economy and managed to pass the pain onto ordinary workers.

More than 40 per cent of Spain's under 30s are out of work and other young workers are on short, tenuous contracts.

Javier Guarascio, 38, an experienced flight attendant who speaks Italian, English and Greek, as well as Spanish, has spent years on short-term contracts in the airline industry.

But he says the movement is more than just economic. "We are indignant about everything," he says. "That's why this is a social and environmental movement too."

Guarascio belongs to the movement's animal rights commission, one of numerous groups the indignants have set

up to come up with concrete alternatives to current society. Among their proposals is a ban of all shows involving animals, including Spain's traditional bullfighting.

Prieto and Guarascio worked throughout Sunday and into the early hours of Monday to fulfil their commitment to leave the square cleaner than when they arrived.

Some protesters climbed scaffolding to clean off billboards plastered with slogans like: "No job, no home, no pension, no fear!" Visitors riding past on the Madrid tourist bus gawped in amazement as young and middle-aged protesters scrambled onto the glass top of the metro entrance to polish it after removing posters.

"This movement is capable of resisting, of sharing its initiatives," said Pastor. "It's able to give out information that is different from the traditional media and it could take the Puerta del Sol again if necessary. The large parties need to take that into account and need to listen to them." •

Poland strikes deal on air force deployment

Poland has signed a deal with the United States on June 13 on the deployment from 2013 of aircraft and training staff to help bolster the EU nation's military capacity, Poland's defence minister said on Monday.

"It prepares the permanent presence of American troops on Polish soil around 2018, in connection with the realisation of the most important project – the anti-missile shield," minister Bogdan Klich told reporters, referring to the anti-missile shield project NATO has adopted as its own.

According to a Polish defence ministry statement, the memorandum foresees "the rotational deployment to Poland of the US multi-task F-16 aircraft and C-130 transport aircraft, supported by the US Air Force's Aviation Detachment deployed on a continuous basis".

It said there would be four annual rotations of aircraft and trainers, two of them involving F-16 fighters, with the first rotation of aircraft taking place in 2013. AFP

Swedish hospital plans womb transplant

Thousands of women who are unable to conceive could benefit if a Swedish hospital succeeds with its plans to transplant a woman's womb, a Swedish doctor said Tuesday.

Mats Brannstrom, who heads a team of six gynaecologists and two transplant surgeons, said the envisaged operation was planned for next year at the Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Gothenburg.

Research has been conducted there since 1999, Brannstrom told Swedish radio news. The research has included transplants on mice and baboons, and an attempted human womb transplant was made in 2000 in Saudi Arabia but did not succeed.

At Sahlgrenska University Hospital, 10 potential donors and 10 patients were being assessed, many cases involving a mother and daughter.

An estimated 2000 women in Sweden could benefit from such a procedure. DPA

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EUROPE

EU budget: the F word can now be spoken

ANN CAHILL

THE debate on the European Union's €2 billion a week budget has been under way for some time. But the battle really begins when the European commission releases its proposals for the EU to raise its own funds later this month. The European parliament will play a leading role in shaping the EU's spending and its prioritising of policies over the seven years to 2020 will leave its mark.

Members of parliament set out their red lines during their latest plenary session in Strasbourg when an overwhelming majority voted for a 5 per cent increase in the budget. They even insisted that the EU gets its own finance-raising mechanism.

While the member states each have a veto on the budget issue, the European parliament needs to approve not only the overall budget, but each spending area as it arises annually. This puts it in a very strong position.

The parliament seems determined to fight for the EU's right to get its own financial resources. Joseph Daul, leader of the largest group in the parliament, the European People's Party, said there has been some progress. "Six months ago we were not able to mention the word. Now in every one of our governments, and the EPP has 16, we can at least talk about it

very openly."

Since the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957, the EU has been longing to raise its own funds. This wish has never been fulfilled as member states have always been weary of a financially-independent union becoming too powerful. As a result the EU increasingly relies on a percentage of each member state's gross national income that now accounts for 70 per cent of its budget.

"Introducing a new system would help avoid the never-ending rows among member states as they complain about putting more into the budget than they receive back," Salvador Garriga Polledo, author of the parliament's report on the budget said. "They also argue over the rebates and special concessions for Britain and others."

Now the parliament wants to divert a share of existing transactions to the EU budget. Revenues from emission allowance auctions and planned new taxes on financial activities or air transport are but a few under consideration.

29 June will mark the next round as the European commission will release its budget proposals. The incoming Polish presidency of the EU has declared itself ready to take on the challenge, but it could be another 18 months before there is a final agreement. •

Danish foreign minister in charm offensive

Danish Foreign Minister Lene Espersen will travel to neighbouring Germany this week to cool tensions over Denmark's plans for permanent customs controls at Danish borders, her ministry said Tuesday.

Espersen announced Friday that she would embark on a campaign to allay fears among Denmark's EU partners that a move to introduce permanent customs controls at Danish borders would weaken Denmark's commitment to the passport-free Schengen zone.

Under pressure from its far-right ally, Denmark's centre-



Zeppelin crash kills Australian pilot in Germany

An Australian-born man died in Friedberg Germany when the airship he was flying crashed and caught fire.

Four people were on board the Zeppelin, which was returning from an advertising trip to an event at Oberursel near Frankfurt late Sunday.

The three passengers jumped out, and due to the decrease in weight, the airship, with the 52-year-old pilot still on board, shot back dozens of meters into the air before bursting into flames.

It then crashed into a nearby field around 300 meters away.

AFF

Facebook chat leaves British juror facing jail

A British juror was warned by a judge on Tuesday that she faces jail for contacting a defendant on the social networking site Facebook, causing the collapse of a major drugs trial.

In what is believed to be the first case of its kind in Britain involving the Internet, juror Joanne Fraill admitted contempt of court at the High Court in London for chatting online with Jamie Sewart during a trial last year.

The charges were brought by Britain's attorney general over the collapse last year of one of a series of trials of an alleged drugs gang in Manchester, northwest England, that cost £6 million (€6.8 million). AFP

Killer bacteria toll rises to 36

The death toll from a killer bacteria outbreak rose to 36 Monday as Germany said a warning to avoid eating cucumbers, lettuce and tomatoes, initially suspected of carrying the bug, had seen up to 10 per cent of crops destroyed.

The Robert Koch Institute

"For many days the number of new infections from EHEC or HUS communicated to the RKI has declined in the country," the agency said in a statement that upped the previous number of fatal cases by one.

After several frantic weeks of searching, German authorities

Authorities have said that the business in the northern village of Bienenbuettel had done nothing wrong however.

With health officials only late last week dropping advice, particularly in northern Germany, to avoid uncooked tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce, the

toes have had to be destroyed," the minister told Tuesday's Neue Osnabruecker Zeitung newspaper.

Aigner defended health officials' advice however. "Protecting consumers from health risks will always take priority over economic interests, even



EPA

(RKI), Germany's national disease agency, said 3,228 people had fallen sick from the virulent EHEC (enterohaemorrhagic E. coli) or the linked kidney ailment haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS).

All 36 deaths have occurred in Germany except one patient who died in Sweden but who had travelled in Germany.

said on Friday they had identified the contamination source as being vegetable sprouts from an organic farm in Lower Saxony, northern Germany.

The farm cultivated sprouts from a variety of products including lettuce, azuki beans, mung beans, fenugreek, alfalfa and lentils. It has been closed and all its products recalled.

scare has cost European farmers hundreds of millions of euros.

German Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner said that between five and ten percent of the three salad vegetables' crops had been destroyed in Germany.

"About 5 900 tonnes of cucumbers, 1 300 hectares of lettuce and 3 500 tonnes of toma-

if that causes serious financial setbacks for some businesses," she told the paper.

The RKI still recommends not eating raw vegetable sprouts.

Germany's Federal Institute for Risk Assessment said Sunday the outbreak is the most serious of its kind recorded in the world to date. AFP

Baltics face bleak future as more workers move west

The Baltic States are confronted with a potential population decline of 25 per cent due to low birth rates, the economic crisis and a lack of measures to stop people leaving.

LIDIJA LIEGIS

Tired of struggling to make ends meet, Gunta Sulce left her hometown Riga, the capital of Latvia, at the age of 47. She was the first of her family to emigrate and didn't speak any English when she arrived in England in 2004. She found a job in a vegetable factory in Nottingham where she worked for four years: "The work was hard and boring. It was cold and wet and often we worked until 10pm." In 2009 she began working as a postal delivery worker with the Royal Mail. "I would love to move back to Latvia, but what would I do? There are no jobs. People can't survive there, and that's why they leave."

She is one of hundreds of thousands estimated to have left because of economic reasons, many of whom work in low-skilled jobs. Along with neighbouring Estonia and Lithuania, Latvia was hard-hit

by the economic crisis. Unemployment in Latvia and Lithuania remains around 17%, the highest in Europe after Spain, according to the EU statistical agency Eurostat.

As a result of an aging population and high levels of migration, the population of Latvia is shrinking by 0.62% every year. According to Riga's Central Statistical Bureau, over 10,500 people emigrated last year. For a country of only 2.2 million people, this is a significant loss. The number of people emigrating has steadily increased since 2009. The total populations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania decreased from 7.9 million in 1990, to less than seven million in 2009. According to Eurostat projections, this will decrease further to 5.4 million in 2060, representing a decline of about 25%. Latvia is predicted to have the sharpest decline (26% down), while Estonia will ex-

perience the lowest drop (15% lower).

One of the problems is that Latvia itself does not know how many people leave each year. While officially, only 3,000 UK-bound emigrants were registered in 2010, the worry is that the actual numbers are much higher. The most accurate figures can be seen in the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS), a temporary measure (abolished this year) operated by the UK Border Agency to keep track of incoming workers from the Baltic states, plus Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia. This indicated that 18,000 Latvians applied for registration in 2009. The majority of applicants for the WRS came from Poland, Latvia and Lithuania - 81% of the total. Petras Anusas, deputy head of the Mission at the Lithuanian Embassy in London, says that the number of Lithuanians arriving has increased steadily since 2004. If the current rate continues, he warns, there will be a population crisis in Lithuania.

Lithuanian music teacher Rimantas Vingras, 41, came to London in 2005. Despite holding music degrees from Moscow and the United States, he struggled to find work. Speak-

ing about the Lithuanian government's attempts at counteracting population loss, he said: "I don't think it's possible to get people to return. Unless they create jobs and increase the living standards, people will keep leaving."

The problem of population loss isn't exclusive to the Baltic states. In 2009, 18,400 Irish nationals emigrated while the following year the figure rose further to 27,700. The population in former East Germany declined substantially after the reunification because of low birth rates and high migration levels, especially among young people moving abroad or to former West Germany.

The high emigration rates from the Baltic States are creating serious demographic and economic problems. Already, these countries face labour shortages due to the brain drain, an unsustainable pension system and a significant population decline.

In addition, there is a risk that languages may be lost as people emigrate from the Baltic states and settle in countries where they do not have opportunities to speak their native language. Of the three Baltic languages, Estonian is most at risk of being lost, as currently only 1.5 million people speak it globally. •

Italian vote is fresh blow to Europe's nuclear ambitions

ANDREW OSBORN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Twenty five years after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and just three months since the earthquake and tsunami wreaked havoc at the Fukushima nuclear complex, Italy, regardless of the reckless will of its government, becomes the third country, joining Germany and Switzerland, to exclude nuclear power," Greenpeace enthused on

of radiation have spooked public opinion in Europe and the rest of world. Many – from Finns to Germans – still recall with horror how radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl power plant disaster reached parts of Europe in 1986. But European public opinion has become even more sceptical about the safety of the technology because of Fukushima.

will now need to find alternative sources of energy to make up the shortfall, a process that is likely to be costly.

Switzerland is also moving towards phasing out nuclear power and is in the process of finalising plans to shut down its five nuclear reactors by 2034. With growing public pressure on other countries to follow suit, the European commission has ordered a safety re-



The result of the referendum casts doubts on the future of nuclear power in Europe. EPA

its web site. "It's clear that we all, not just those of us who are Italian, have good reason to celebrate," it added, noting that a recent poll had shown that a majority of French citizens favoured a gradual phase-out of nuclear power.

There is little doubt that terrifying images of the Fukushima nuclear power plant being rocked by a series of explosions and the subsequent leak

Germany's very public decision to reject nuclear power has been the most significant. The German government earlier this month approved a plan to shut down all of the country's seventeen nuclear reactors by 2022. The first member of the G8 group of major economies to turn its back on nuclear power altogether, Germany has traditionally generated twenty percent of its electricity through nuclear power and

view of the EU's 143 nuclear plants, while Russian president Dmitry Medvedev has proposed agreeing a new set of global nuclear safety rules to restore shaken public confidence. In the meantime, Britain, France and Poland among the EU countries, as well as neighbouring states such as Russia and Belarus, are urgently reassessing plans to expand their nuclear programmes. •

Kuneva bids for Bulgarian Presidency

GEORGI GOTEV

FORMER European commissioner Meglena Kuneva has officially declared her intention to make an independent stand for the Bulgarian presidency, a largely ceremonial position, in the October elections. While the candidates of the two major parties, prime minister Boyko Borisov's ruling centre-right GERB and the opposition Socialist Party, are yet to be announced, analysts agree that Kuneva's candidacy has caused excitement in the polls.

Other Eastern European leaders have seen their careers boosted by EU experience. Two years ago, EU budget Commissioner Dalia Grybauskaitė and member of the European parliament Valdis Dombrovskis left their European seats to return home. Grybauskaitė went on to win the Lithuanian presidential elections, while Dombrovskis was elected prime minister of Latvia.

A self-proclaimed "candidate of the people," Kuneva lacks the backing of any traditional party, potentially a handicap to her candidacy. She has shunned the support of her own party, the NDSV, a liberal grouping founded by former king Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha, who returned to Bulgaria in 2001 and won that year's elections in a landslide. Kuneva has announced her candidacy as an independent amid dwindling support for both Simeon and the NDSV, an announcement that could be seen as opportunistic given her support for the once popular party. One option for Kuneva could be to appeal for support from Borisov, who recently said his own party was "not very interested" in the presidential post. But the prime minister has shown a deep personal dislike for Kuneva, denying her a second term in the European commission.

According to local analysts, Kuneva

should instead turn to the Socialist Party for backing. Its leader, Sergei Stanishev, has already stated that his party's aim is to prevent the GERB candidate from winning. With nobody expecting a winner in the first round, Kuneva's best bet could be to beat the socialist candidate in the first round, and then receive the Socialist Party's endorsement in a second round runoff. Still, there is doubt about whether voters on the left would actually cast a ballot for the former EU commissioner. Angry socialists see her as the chief negotiator of the country's EU accession treaty, which in their view has sacrificed entire sectors of the Bulgarian economy as well as two nuclear reactors at the country's Kozloduy plant.

Kuneva's real power base could prove to be the large number of undecided voters, who on numerous occasions have elevated non-establishment candidates to power. •

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European Daily

ABROAD

Red carpet unfurls in Shanghai

CLIFFORD COONAN, SHANGHAI

BOLSTERED by the Chinese film industry's rapid growth, the Shanghai International Film Festival draws the attentions of fans, film stars and, not least, media mogul Rupert Murdoch.

Fans braved the rain to see Chinese A-list celebrities like Fan Bingbing, Chen Kun and Li Bingbing, but also to check out major Hollywood stars such as Susan Sarandon, Matt Dillon and Mischa Barton.

Film directors, actors, regulators, producers and not a few film fans converged this week on China's biggest city

is not being fully realised... because market access remains so restricted," the News Corp. chief said.

Murdoch has spent years trying to woo the Chinese leadership, but he has had a tough time breaking into China.

In a sign of how attractive the Chinese film market has become, Murdoch was accompanying his wife Wendi Deng Murdoch. She was there to present the Wayne Wang-directed film *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*, which she produced.

Top director Barry Levinson will chair the jury, which also



EPA

for the 14th annual Shanghai International Film Festival, a showcase for an entertainment industry that is booming but that many say is hampered by too many restrictions.

Chinese box office takings zipped past the €1 billion threshold last year for the first time, a rise of 64 per cent, leaving it well placed to become the world's second biggest film market in coming years. However, China has a quota system of 20 imported films a year, despite World Trade Organisation warnings to free up distribution of movies.

James Cameron's 3D science fiction epic *Avatar* took €140 million in China last year, the second largest ticket revenue worldwide. Since then foreign studios have gone China-crazy.

News Corporation chief Rupert Murdoch had strong words of praise for the remarkable rise of China's film industry, but he also said the entertainment industry was being held back because of restrictions on foreign films.

"The promise of investment

features European talents like Britain's Christopher Hampton and Paz Vega from Spain, as well as France's Tran Anh Hung.

The SIFF as it is popularly known runs from 11-19 June and will screen 200 films around China's financial capital.

Europe plays a major role at the Shanghai festival every year, with major pavilions sponsored by Italy, France and Germany a feature of the event's market.

Half of the 16 films competing for the Golden Goblet Award at the festival are from Europe, and the European Film Promotion is bringing six European films to the festival.

This year the festival is attended by some of Europe's top young talent – German actor Alexander Fehling, who starred in *Goethe!* and was also seen in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, as well as Sylvia Hoeks of the Netherlands, who featured in Rudolph van Berg's *Tirza*. •

Romney, Bachmann shine in Republican presidential debate

The American public was introduced on Monday night to the Republican presidential candidates for 2012 when the seven frontrunners faced off at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire.

BRIAN BEARY, WASHINGTON DC

Mitt Romney, the former of governor of Massachusetts who failed to secure the nomination in 2008 but who is favoured to win this time, clocked up a confident performance, unfazed by rivals' efforts to knock him off his perch.

But the real star was Michelle Bachmann, congresswoman from Minnesota and the only female candidate. Presenting herself to the nation, Bachmann exuded charisma and energy, while displaying a solid grasp of policy details.

The number two favourite for the nomination, former governor of Minnesota Tim Pawlenty, failed to sparkle and notably declined to take a swipe at Romney over the latter's flip-flopping on healthcare reform.

Newt Gingrich, former House Speaker who back in the 1990s was the Republicans' leading light, also struggled to put on as impressive a show as Romney and Bachmann. Gingrich's campaign is in deep trouble as top campaign staffers recently quit en masse.

All candidates struck a polite, friendly tone with one another and directed any negative remarks toward President Barack Obama.

However, the day before, Pawlenty had slammed Romney by calling Obama's sweeping reform of healthcare enacted in 2010 "ObomneyCare" as it was inspired by a law Romney signed as governor of Massachusetts.

But, asked to clarify his remark, Pawlenty refused to repeat the term and seemed uneasy as Romney turned directly

toward him. He instead tried to differentiate himself from Romney by highlighting his blue-collar background – even praising labour unions – in contrast to multimillionaire businessman Romney, who comes from a wealthy family.

Economy policy dominated the debate, with each candidate attacking Obama's poor record on job creation, the US unemployment rate having recently hit 9 per cent.

Romney presented himself

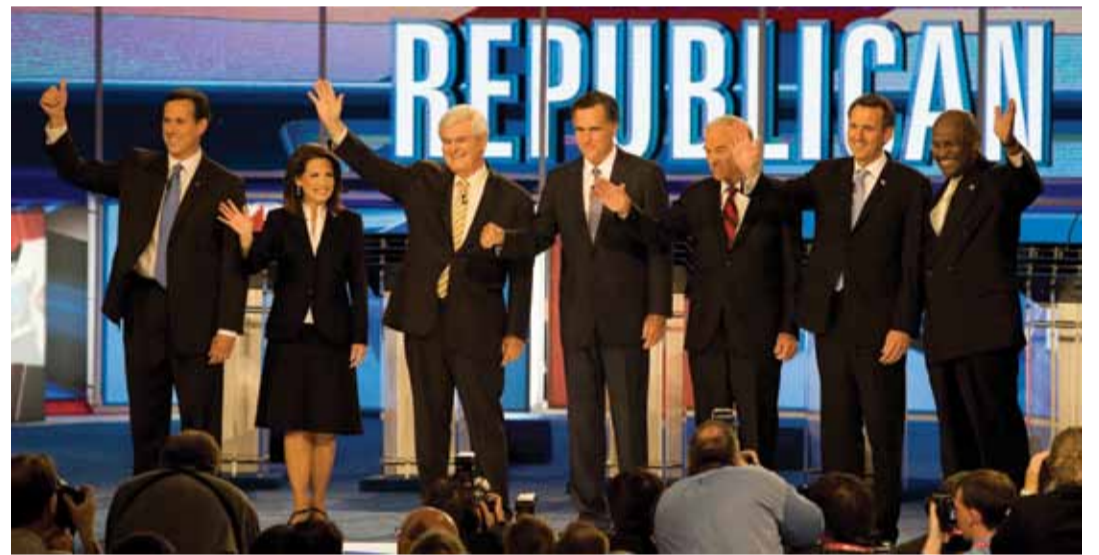
Republican grassroots, are to Mormonism – disassociated himself from Cain's remark, saying "people of all faiths are welcome here."

Foreign policy, in particular the US military interventions in Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq – and potentially Yemen in future – featured less prominently. Bachmann castigated President Obama for the Libya mission – both because the US had "no vital national interest there" and because US was not

"Keynesian economics" and his focus on more arcane subjects like currency policy came across as academic compared to the more populist notes struck by his rivals.

The seventh candidate, Rick Santorum, a former senator from Pennsylvania, echoed Bachmann's socially and fiscally-conservative views, but lacked her charisma and energy.

Bachmann several times stressed her role as a mother: to five children she had biological-



CJ GUNTHER/EPA

as the leader of the Republican moderates and made it clear that the economy and job creation were the core of his campaign. When abortion and gay rights came up, Romney seemed irritated and anxious to return to economic issues.

The other candidates were more socially conservative than Romney, with Bachmann vowing to overturn Obama's recent repeal of the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy, which barred gay people from serving openly in the US military.

In a tense exchange, businessman Herman Cain, the only non-politician in the race – and the only black Republican candidate – defended an earlier-expressed view that Muslims seeking jobs should be required to pass a loyalty test.

Romney, whose Mormon religion makes him vulnerable – given how hostile Evangelical Christians, the core of the

leading but was rather allowing Europe to manage the mission.

"The President has deferred leadership to France – that's

“People of all faiths are welcome here

all we need to know," she said scathingly. The only other reference to Europe came from Pawlenty – and was similarly negative.

Asked about US economy's current lacklustre growth rate, Pawlenty said it was vital to strengthen the economy, adding dismissively, "we're not the same as Spain or Portugal."

Ron Paul, a congressman from Texas who also ran in 2008, stayed true to his libertarian values, urging a major reduction in government spending and involvement – both on domestic and foreign policy.

However, his use of terms like

ly with her husband of 33 years, as well as being foster mother to 23 children.

One notable absentee was the former governor of Alaska Sarah Palin, the Republican vice-presidential candidate in 2008. Despite continuing to grab headlines and retain popularity with the conservative grassroots, Palin is now seen as unlikely to run, having not taken the necessary organisational steps to set up a nationwide campaign.

It was no coincidence that this introductory debate took place in New Hampshire: the state will be crucial in determining the winner of the Republican candidacy in 2012. Traditionally, the other key state has been Iowa, but frontrunner Romney is trying to downplay the significance of the Midwestern state. He is likely to lose there, as Evangelical Christians comprise a disproportionate share of the Republican electorate. •

First EU wide Data Roaming Flat Rate

This summer, Deutsche Telekom will launch a new data roaming offer called 'Travel & Surf' which will make customers' concerns regarding hidden costs a thing of the past. The new product will deliver a completely new worry-free data roaming experience for consumers travelling within the European Union.

Deutsche Telekom customers will be able to choose from a variety of data passes suitable for any kind of internet activity when abroad, including the first EU-wide data roaming flat rate. The new pass system will reduce prices to as low as 15 cent per Megabyte in all visited EU countries. The passes will be valid for all networks in all countries within the EU – without restrictions.

The passes on offer start with a small day pass for approximately €2 and a further day pass with ample Megabyte volumes for only €5 to €10. Customers with higher demands can pick the weekly flat rate pass, starting from €15. 'Travel & Surf' is available on smartphones, tablet PC's and laptops, and is very easy to use: once the customer tries to access the internet when abroad he/she will be redirected to a startpage and in parallel will be informed via SMS about the pass offers and prompted to make a booking. Customers can then select their roaming pass directly via SMS or via an easy to understand startpage using their browser, and regularly check their level of consumption.



Deutsche Telekom, a leading European telecom operator, proves with its new data roaming offer 'Travel & Surf' that the company is offering solid answers to the concerns raised in the European debate on roaming offers and prices. The new product is also proof that data roaming prices are continually decreasing and competition is developing well – in a very innovative and dynamic market.

Life is for sharing.



Army continues crackdown operations in northern Syria

Syrian army forces continued its massive operation in the northern province of Idlib, as more tanks were deployed in its different cities, activists said.

Dozens of tanks arrived at Maarat al-Naaman's northern entrance, activists said online.

The Syrian army was deployed across Idlib, where it launched search-and-arrest

operations in several towns on Monday.

Troops were deployed in the restive town of Jisr al-Shagher and were also stationed across 30 kilometres to the east to Ariha city.

The Syrian forces said the Idlib operation was aimed at "restoring security" after 120 security personnel were killed last week in Jisr al-Shagher by

"armed groups."

The opposition claims those killed were defectors, who were executed by fellow soldiers.

Human rights groups have said that at least 1 300 people have been killed and more than 10 000 detained since the protests calling for the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad started in March.

DPA

Heroic farewell for convicted Russian officer

SHAUN WALKER, MOSCOW

Moscow bid farewell to Yuri Budanov on Monday, the former Russian Army officer who went to jail for the abduction and murder in 2003 of an 18-year-old Chechen girl. There are now worries that anger over the murder of Budanov, who was gunned down in broad daylight by unknown attackers in Moscow last Friday, could lead to revenge attacks from Russian nationalists and increased ethnic tension. The mourners came in their hundreds, and at the cemetery on the outskirts of Moscow, a military band played while soldiers gave a six-gun salute, in a funeral more appro-

priate for a military hero than a war criminal.

A hero is exactly what many of those who gathered on Monday consider Budanov to be. They claimed that 18-year-old Elza Kungayeva, who was tortured and probably raped before she was murdered, was not an ordinary girl, but a sniper, a claim that the investigation did not substantiate. Budanov was given a ten-year sentence in 2003, but was freed on parole in 2009, to anger in Chechnya. Police say the most likely motive for his killing was a revenge attack by Chechens.

Largely from Russia's nationalist far right, many of those

present advocated revenge killings of Chechens, and promised that the former soldier's death would not go unpunished. One, who would only identify himself as Sasha, said that it was "time to teach the Caucasus a lesson, in the only language they understand, the language of violence".

Some of the mourners wore neo-Nazi paraphernalia, while others wore Orthodox Christian and pan-Slavic logos. A few wore t-shirts bearing the image of Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian-Serb leader recently sent to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Even a vote held on Ekho

Moskvy, a liberal radio station, found that more than half the callers favoured Budanov's rehabilitation. The worry among rights activists now is that nationalists will attempt revenge attacks on Chechens and other migrant workers. Foreign tourists and residents of Moscow from European countries are not usually at risk, but anyone with dark skin or "non-Slavic appearance" can become a target. After a Spartak Moscow football fan was killed by a group of men from Dagestan last December, gangs of youths went on the rampage in central Moscow, attacking anyone looking non-Russian. •

In Egypt, transition to democracy stumbles on what comes first

The Muslim Brotherhood – Egypt's strongest and best-organised party – rejects growing pressure to postpone the country's first free elections. After decades of government oppression have left a barren political landscape where new political parties find little room to grow, many now fear that a parliament in which the Brotherhood is strong will result in a constitution of narrow interests.

ISSANDR EL AMRANI, CAIRO

Egyptian Prime Minister Essam Sharaf has waded into an increasingly heated debate about Egypt's transition to democracy by suggesting that the parliamentary elections scheduled for September be postponed in order to give new political forces more time to emerge.

Meeting with Egyptian expatriates during a visit to South Africa, Mr Sharaf said Egypt is still going through "a dialogue between different political currents." He added that postponing the elections would give this process more time, the leading Egyptian state-owned daily al-Ahram reported.

Egyptian political activists have argued about the timing of Egypt's transition to democracy ever since the overthrow of former president Hosni Mubarak's regime in February. Mr Sharaf's comments put him squarely against the prevailing opinion of the generals running the country. They have conversely voiced preference for a rapid transition back to civilian rule.

Since Mubarak stepped down on 11 February, the country has been ruled by a 20-member Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), which has appointed a new cabinet with Mr Sharaf at its head. Parliament has been disbanded, and the interim government and SCAF have ruled by decree, but both the SCAF generals and a number of activists have urged a quick return to civilian rule. Following a referendum on

constitutional amendments in March, the SCAF announced parliamentary elections would be held in September and presi-



AMEL PAIN/EPA

dential elections by the end of the year. The new president and parliament would then midwife the process of drafting a new constitution, with parliament selecting a 100-member constituent assembly. According to this plan, Egypt's new constitution would be put to a new referendum for popular approval by the end of 2012.

There is little consensus about this timetable though. Advocates of the SCAF plan say that it was implicitly endorsed by the March referendum, in which 77.2 per cent of participants voted in favour of constitutional amendments. This view has been most vocally supported by the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest Islamist group in Egypt.

"We reject the calls to postpone the procedures for transferring political power to the Egyptian people, which are specified in a timetable set by

the Constitutional Declaration," said Mohamed Badie, the chairman of the Muslim Brothers. "These calls are made by some strange voices that insist on imposing their own views on others, even though the majority of the people rejected such viewpoints in the latest referendum."

Detractors say the referendum only concerned specific articles, not the transition timetable, and in any case has been rendered moot by the SCAF's decision to enact a temporary constitutional declaration that replaced the previous constitution.

In a reply, a group of human

rights NGOs issued a statement last week arguing that a constitution must come first, pointing out that this is the model followed in Tunisia and Yemen's transitions. "The insistence on putting the cart before the horse — electing a parliament based on the rules of the old regime's constitution before preparing a constitution for the new order — will allow parties that win parliamentary and presidential elections to manage the drafting of the constitution in accordance with their own narrow interests," the statement said.

Some presidential candidates, including Amr Moussa, the former Secretary-General of the Arab League and currently the favoured candidate for the presidency, have suggested yet other alternatives. Last week, Mr Moussa suggested the presidential election should take place first, followed by the

drafting a new constitution and then parliamentary elections.

Another prominent presidential candidate, the Nobel Prize winning former director of the International Atomic Energy Agency Mohamed ElBaradei also opposes the current timetable. He has suggested that a US-style bill of rights should be drafted first to consecrate basic rights that the future constitution would have to respect.

For many Egyptian secularists, the debate about the constitution and elections is largely about their relative weakness against a well-established Muslim Brotherhood. Most of Egypt's secular parties are only now being established, and they do not have the grassroots network of the Brotherhood. They fear that a parliament in which the Brotherhood is strongly represented will lead to a conservative constitution. And they also fear that what they see as a tacit alliance between the Brotherhood and the current military rulers could jeopardise a genuine transition to democracy.

Sobhi Saleh, a leading member of the Brotherhood, upset many last week when he appeared on a popular TV show, accusing those who call for a secular state of being unbelievers. A coalition of activist groups calling itself the National Committee for Change has called on the Brotherhood to provide guarantees about the future constitution should the current timetable be maintained — perhaps by having political forces agree to general principles for the document that even an Islamist-dominated parliament would respect.

The final decision about the constitution, Mr Sharaf said, would be "up to the Egyptian people." Yet, for now, it is the SCAF's generals who have taken all decisions — although sometimes as a result of popular pressure. A popular call for a change in the timetable may be growing, but it still faces an uphill battle in the face of Islamist support for the current plan. •

AUSTRALIA

Flight delays in Australia as Chile ash plays havoc

Thousands of passengers endured a third day of delays in Australia on Tuesday June 14 as a volcanic ash cloud from Chile kept planes grounded, with airlines disagreeing on whether it was safe to fly.

The eruption of the Puyehue volcano, high in the Andes, has spewed ash that has disrupted air travel on a scale not seen since the volcanic cloud over Iceland paralysed Europe in 2010.

Andrew Tupper, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology's Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre head, warned the crisis was not yet over. AFP

IVORY COAST

Over 300 000 still displaced in Ivory Coast

Over 300 000 people are still displaced in Ivory Coast almost two months after the end of the country's post-election crisis, according to the UN refugees agency.

While the situation in the west is improving, tensions are still high in the southwestern

Sassandra region where over 280 civilians were killed in early May by supporters of former president Laurent Gbagbo.

Alassane Ouattara was sworn in as president on May 21 after a nearly five-month battle with Gbagbo, who rejected the UN-backed election commission's ruling that he lost November presidential elections. AFP

LIBYA

World Chess Federation chief meets Gaddafi for chess match

Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi played chess on Saturday in Tripoli with World Chess Federation President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, even as the country's civil war raged and NATO airstrikes continued against his regime.

Ilyumzhinov, who is conducting a tour of North Africa, told the Russian news agency Interfax that the embattled ruler had vowed, even during their match, never to leave Libya. Ilyumzhinov quoted Gaddafi as saying "I'm neither premier nor president nor king. I hold no office and, therefore, have no office to relinquish." AFP

Compromise after victory for Erdogan in Turkish elections

JOOST LAGENDIJK, ISTANBUL

ON Sunday, Turkey's prime minister Tayyip Erdogan won an impressive victory in the parliamentary elections. After having been in charge for almost nine years, the charismatic leader of the centre-right Justice and Development Party (AKP) managed to convince 50 per cent of the Turkish electorate to vote for his party. Erdogan was rewarded for the strong

country's agenda. Many Turkish and foreign observers think that the need to look for consensus is good for Turkish democracy.

The question is whether the other parties will cooperate. The main opposition party, the centre-left Republican People's Party (CHP), won 26 per cent of the vote, but the result will probably not be enough to silence critics of the new party



RIZA OZEL/EPA

growth of the Turkish economy since he came to power in 2002 and for an active foreign policy that has created a growing self-confidence about Turkey's role as an emerging power.

As a result of a new distribution of parliamentary seats over the country's electoral districts, the ruling party was not able to translate its gains into more seats in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The AKP failed to get 60 per cent of the seats, the share necessary to be able to adopt single-handedly a new constitution in parliament and bring it to a referendum.

This means that the AKP has to sit down and talk to the opposition parties to reach a compromise on a new constitution, the most pressing issue on the

leader, Kemal Kilicdaroglu. During the election campaign, he broke with the party's pro-status quo stance and came up with new ideas on the constitution, the Kurdish problem and Turkey's European Union accession process. Kilicdaroglu will only be able to reach a compromise with the AKP on these issues if he manages to outmaneuver his party's old guard.

The other winners of the elections were the independent candidates supported by the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). They should be part of the process as well, but that is only likely to happen if they are willing to set aside some of their more far-reaching demands. •

OPINION

Europe today

BERNARD GUETTA

What Europe is discovering in Libya



It was an American who spilled the beans. If most European countries are hardly taking part in aerial operations in support of the Libyan insurrection, operations that they had however approved of in principle, then it is simply, as Robert Gates declared on Friday, because their budget is too limited for them to be able to do it.

The head of the Pentagon was speaking the truth, but not the whole truth.

Having relied entirely on American protection since the beginning of the

Cold War and further reduced their military effort with the disappearance of the Soviet menace, many countries of the Union possess virtually no armed forces. Indeed, even the great European powers, even Paris and London, have extremely limited capacities of military projection. France and Great Britain are able to undertake the Libyan operation but given their engagement elsewhere – notably in Afghanistan – exhaust their munitions supplies and suffer from their lack of

manpower and materials. This will only worsen as their budgetary difficulties increase.

“Great, fantastic!” Europeans who consider their country has no reason to be in Kabul, Misrata or Abidjan will say. But, beyond the debate on the legitimacy of these interventions, no power can do without military hardware and not condemn itself to political inexistence. The capacity to act or react is essential to make one’s voice heard and to count on the international scene. There are two reasons why this is particularly true in Europe at the start of this century.

The first is that even those Europeans, who considered their military dependence on the United States as the best guarantee of Western cohesion, have had to reconsider their position since the Americans failed to lift a finger in support of Georgia during its conflict with Russia. In 2008, the most Atlanticist of Europeans suddenly discovered that the United States could opt to stabilise its relations with Moscow rather than support one of its most faithful European allies, placing its interests before a solidarity that they thought unshakeable. Even Po-

land rallied to the ideas of common defence and foreign policy at a European level; a change of tack that was all the more opportune given the Wall Street crash that followed.

Having already decided not to let a European conflict of secondary importance weigh on all its international interests, the United States had to inject so much public money into saving its economy that even the Pentagon must now take part in putting federal finances in order. The United States are no longer ready to finance Europe’s defence and there is little reason to think that they will be in the future. This was Robert Gates’ perfectly explicit message, and it can be seen – starting today – in the deliberate way in which the Americans are abandoning leadership to the Europeans on the Libyan frontline.

Left to bear most of the burden of the operation, Europeans must now surely notice that they need to increase their military spending. Particularly so, given that they will have to face a long period of instability created by the Arab spring, from Rabat to Sana’a. Nobody knows where the bloodthirsty madness of the Syrian regime will take

us. What is certain is that it is leading to chain reactions all over the region, just as the fall of Colonel Gaddafi will reshape the North African landscape as soon as it occurs.

All this is happening a stone’s throw from a Europe that can no longer remain indifferent to these events, nor escape them. This is the second reason why Europeans can no longer avoid thinking about financing their own defence. But, at a moment when budgetary restrictions already cut to the bone in a majority of countries of the Union, becoming outright intolerable in Greece, and when these restrictions run the risk of causing political tensions, it would appear to be simply inconceivable to take from education or healthcare and give to the military. Europeans can only increase their military capacity by pooling their resources and developing common programmes. This is what is being undertaken by Britain and France. Even the British, despite their Atlanticism, have understood this need – a need not limited to defence. Europe must pool its resources in all domains and align its policies. This is the lesson to draw from Robert Gates’ assessment. •

The Editor’s word

Filling the void

At the heart of the EU quarter of Brussels there lies the Schuman roundabout. It is surrounded by the busy, self-important institutions of European unity. The towering Berlaymont building stands on one corner. The European Council building is opposite. Over the past 60 years, this traffic roundabout has become one of the power hubs of the world.

Most people walk around the outside of the roundabout, dodging the heavy Brussels traffic. Almost no one crosses the road to the middle. There is no point. There is nothing there.

Nothing. This void at the centre of the EU Quarter is the perfect symbol for Europe. All that fuss, all that money, and yet the project is empty at its core.

Maybe that is stretching the

metaphor too far. It’s just a roundabout after all. Yet this windblown empty space seems to illustrate a lack of imagination, a failure to do anything outside the strict guidelines.

It would of course be a diplomatic nightmare to find the right symbol to fill that empty space. It would have to have the support of 27 different countries. It would have to appeal as much to a fisherman from Galicia as a banker from Frankfurt.

One solution would be to hand over the space to the country holding the six-month presidency of the EU. Let them decide how they want to fill it. Portugal might decide to put up some contemporary sculpture. The Dutch might construct a pop-up building. The people would decide.

That is the kind of project

this newspaper would be keen to back, because it fits with our aims. We want to create a daily newspaper to fill the gap in Europe.

Every country has its national newspapers, but there is no one newspaper that speaks to all Europeans, whether they are reading it on a café terrace in Berlin, or in a park in Lisbon, or on a high speed train linking London and Paris.

We want to show that Europe is not just a bureaucratic project, not just a cluster of office buildings on a roundabout. It has a history, a culture, an identity, every bit as strong as the United States or China. We want to challenge people to think like Europeans and act like Europeans. We want to fill the void.

DEREK BLYTH, EDITOR



Letters to the Editor

Take out Gaddafi

Why are political leaders mincing their words instead of making the Gaddafi dictatorship a thing of the past? For going on three months, the US, France, the UK and a dozen allies have been busy deposing the desert despot. Now don’t get me wrong. On all counts I think that the coalition has set out on a noble endeavour of protecting innocent Libyans from slaughter by the tyrant. What troubles me is that there seems to be no end in sight, no final objective of ridding Libya of Gaddafi once and for all. Until this objective is set, I will agree with the critics who say we are wasting our resources in those thankless deserts.

WILLIAM ALLMAN, LONDON

Nuclear power is the option for the future

The disastrous consequences of the German decision to aban-

don nuclear power cannot be overstated. What we are witnessing is the major economic engine in Europe, a major producer worldwide, reintroducing the mid-nineteenth century. Of the energy sources that use a finite fuel, nuclear power is by far the cleanest. Now a wind of populism is laying to waste more than half a century of a virtually non-polluting source of energy. Merkel then boldly states that her energy plans will hasten a move towards renewables, but cannot account for the decades of coal and oil burning that precedes any dream of a solar and wind powered German industry. This is bad news for Germany, and bad news for Europe.

JOHN, PARIS
AMERICAN EXCHANGE STUDENT

Corruption killing recovery

The fact that the austerity crisis that has hit the countries sometimes derogatorily referred to as the PIGS, is a serious matter, and few observers have missed that the problems go beyond simple economics. Unfortunately there are still gaping holes in the discussion on the root causes of this predicament. As an example, Transparency International’s annual corruption index shows not only that PIGS score the lowest of the pre-2004 member states, but that their scores were dropping even before the severity of the austerity crises came to light. Similar measurement of government quality tells the same story of a decline over the last decade. This is not only a problem of a few crooked politicians at the top, but permeates societies at large. Without real effort to clean up government and make it rewarding for citizens to act honestly towards each other, the road to recovery is likely to be a cul-de-sac.

RASMUS BROMS, GÖTEBORG
THE QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GÖTHEBURG IN SWEDEN

Time for life is slipping away

Cloud computing. Such a heavenly name! But I’m very concerned that this “breakthrough” in work organisation might leave me with even less freedom than I currently enjoy. I must admit that I am no fan of cutting edge technology in general: mobile phones were something of a shock to me, Facebook bowled me over, and now cloud computing might just finish me off. If somebody else knows when I’m working on a document and how much I’m writing, then they also know when I’m doing nothing. The great reggae poet Linton Kwesi Johnson wrote that the introduction of new technology should give us “more time for living, more time for life,” and lamented the fact that it does not. For me, cloud computing is just one more fantastic development that will chip away a little more at my freedom to decide what I do with my time.

ZSÓFIA GYORI, BUDAPEST

Congratulations

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WWF

Soros on global transparency

A French cure for the resource curse

GEORGE SOROS

The campaign to ensure that companies engaged in extractive activities disclose all of their payments in their host countries is gaining momentum – and France is leading the effort. President Nicolas Sarkozy should be applauded for supporting a new initiative promoting strict transparency standards for petroleum, gas, and mining companies listed on European stock exchanges.

France, at the heart of the European Union and President of both the G-8 and G-20 this year, is in an exceptional position to encourage such a regulatory move. With French leadership, 2011 offers a golden opportunity for the most important capital markets to adopt clear, precise rules requiring full financial disclosure by extractive-industry companies to governmental authorities.

Oil, gas, and mining generate billions of dollars per year for governments and companies. Moreover, these industries often play a central role in the economic development of resource-rich countries. Yet, despite great natural wealth, a majority of people in these countries lives in poverty.

The actual taxes and payments made by mining, oil, and other extractive-industry companies to governments are usually a well-kept secret, even though most of these govern-

ments claim to use the revenue for the public good. In reality, in far too many countries, ordinary citizens do not benefit from any of this money; in fact, they must bear the brunt of the environmental and social costs imposed by mining and drilling operations.

Indeed, these well-kept industry and government secrets can have serious and widespread repercussions. Witness the upheaval in North Africa and the Middle East. In these countries, many of which are rich in oil and gas, citizens are staging protests against corruption and political repression. At bottom, they are protesting against the mismanagement of their countries' wealth and resources – with implications that affect the security and affordability

“These well-kept industry and government secrets can have serious and widespread repercussions.

of the entire world's energy supplies.

Transparency is an essential part of the solution. Citizens everywhere must be assured that oil and gas firms, as well as mining companies, publish all of their relevant financial information, broken down by country and by project, and including all payments made to



ANDY RAIN / EPA

host-country public budgets.

If European regulators can agree on this requirement for all extractive-industry companies listed on their stock exchanges, this transparency norm will be applied to companies regardless of where their headquarters are located. Regulators must also stipulate that company reports be made available on a regular, timely basis, and that they are easily accessible and comparable across countries and other extractive companies.

The United States has already passed legislation requiring public disclosure of payments to governments, through the 2010 Dodd-Frank law. That law's requirement that companies fully disclose their revenue

streams by country and by project applies to 90% of international oil and gas companies and to eight of the ten largest mining companies.

This will help citizens track how that money is used, but it will not help them to assess whether their governments are collecting a fair share. If the EU were to require companies to publish detailed information regarding production and operational numbers, financial and accounting balances, and payments to authorities, companies would become truly accountable to citizens, and government revenues would be augmented.

Such regulatory reform is now under consideration by the European Commission, and French support is imperative if the EU is to announce this

month the necessary legislative moves to promote transparency. French Finance Minister Christine Lagarde recently highlighted the necessity of promoting “initiatives within industrial sectors that aim to enhance governance, integrity, and transparency in economic transactions.”

At its recent summit in Deauville, France, the G-8 called for the first time for mandatory reporting by oil, gas, and mining companies. This is an important advance, but, unfortunately, it is qualified by language that allows voluntary approaches as an alternative, and it focuses only on payments transparency.

Now the world must look to the G-20 summit in Cannes this November to make an un-

equivocal commitment to the reporting requirements needed, given that important emerging economies such as Brazil, India, and China, as well as South Africa and other resource-rich African countries, will be at the table.

The importance of financial transparency in the extractive industries is not limited to one country or era – and it is too important to be left to voluntary efforts alone. Greater accountability and stronger governance for such companies could potentially change lives, economies, and political systems around the world. •

George Soros is Chairman of Soros Fund Management.

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BUSINESS

Sarkozy calls for regulation on commodity markets

French President Nicolas Sarkozy called Tuesday for tighter controls on the speculators he blames for soaring food and energy prices threatening global growth.

Saying the world had "worked extremely hard" to revive growth in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, Sarkozy said "one of the main threats to growth is the rising cost of



EPA

commodities."

The president has said he plans to use France's chairmanship of the Group of 20 top economies to push for regulations to curb speculative trade in the commodities markets but

this has met strong resistance from suppliers such as Brazil and Argentina who have benefited from high prices.

Sarkozy, speaking at the invitation of European Commission president Jose-Manuel Barroso, said "the G20 nations are the first concerned by this issue and it is up to them to install conditions for sustainable growth."

The same rules applied to curb financial market speculation needed to be used to crack down on commodities prices which threaten inflation and social tensions.

Speaking ahead of a meeting next week of G20 farm ministers, Sarkozy won support from Barroso, who said the issue was vital as the commodities markets expanded and price volatility increased with the involvement of new investors.

Sarkozy said deregulation in the financial and banking sectors had brought the world to the edge of an abyss.

"A market with no rules is no longer a market ... What caused catastrophe for the financial markets can lead to the same catastrophe on the raw materials market," he said. AFP

Greece's invisible jobless

As Greece prepares to sell another batch of six-month treasury bills worth €1.25 billion, the country's unemployment figures remain alarmingly high.

NICK MALKOUTZIS

There are many visible signs in Greece that the economic crisis has taken hold of the country; dozens of shops are closed in every neighbourhood and fewer cars are on the road. But unemployment, one of the most serious consequences of the three-year recession and mounting debt crisis, is almost

invisible to 34-year-olds, with unemployment hovering at 42.5 per cent. 25 to 34-year-olds are not significantly more fortunate. Among them, 22.6 per cent are without a job. Spain is the only EU country with higher levels of youth unemployment, though not by much.

Given that the austerity meas-

ures Greece adopted as part of

why this is not the case. Firstly, Greece does not do social security in the same way as central European or Scandinavian countries. Benefits are only paid for the first 12 months of unemployment, after which they are on their own. So of Greece's 811 000 unemployed, only 280 000 receive state benefits, which amount to less than €500 per month. Practically, this means the unemployed have to rely on friends and family for financial support.

A second reason for the apparent invisibility of the growing ranks of unemployed is that

even this estimate looks optimistic. The government is currently embarking on another round of austerity measures, that include further tax hikes and cuts in public spending. It has also announced plans to fire 150 000 public servants by 2015.

There are fears this will further undermine consumption, the rise of which is seen as critical in getting Greece back to growth. Meanwhile, unemployment is forecast to surpass 20 per cent next year.

Faced with diminishing opportunities and scant assistance in



ALEXANDROS VLACHOS/EPA

Nokia and Apple settle patent row

Finnish mobile phone giant Nokia Tuesday said it has settled a patent row with Apple, and both companies were to withdraw complaints filed with the US International Trade Commission.

Apple was to make a one-time payment and pay royalties for the term of the agreement, Nokia said, adding that details were to remain confidential.

Nokia has previously alleged that Apple violated several patents used in the rival company's computers as well as iPhone, iPad and iPod touch devices.

"We are very pleased to

have Apple join the growing number of Nokia licensees," Nokia chief executive Stephen Elop said in a statement.

In recent years Nokia has experienced increasing competition in the smartphone business from the likes of Apple and rival Google's Android operating system and has seen its market shares shrink.

Earlier this year, Nokia announced it had agreed to join forces with Microsoft in developing platforms for mobile telephones, dropping its own Symbian system in favour of the Windows Phone system. DPA

impossible to detect.

Despite the appearance of business as usual, Greece has just announced the worst unemployment figures since joining the euro. The jobless rate in March reached 16.2 per cent, which means some 230 000 people were sacked over the previous year. Unemployment soars almost 7 percentage points above the European Union average. Only Latvia, Lithuania and Spain show more depressing figures.

Still, the Hellenic Statistics Authority indicates that those most severely affected are 15

and the International Monetary Fund had such a pronounced focus on employment, one might expect the signs of joblessness to be more visible. There are two serious reasons

they simply have nowhere to go. Greece has no formal system for helping young people to enter the job market or for setting up newly unemployed middle-aged people with opportunities to retrain. Unlike in Germany, France and many other EU countries, there are no micro financing programmes to help young Greek entrepreneurs start their own businesses, though European Commission funding exists for such schemes.

Greece is not expected to return to growth until sometime towards the end of 2012, and

their homeland, many young Greeks are likely to try their luck abroad. A survey last August, when the crisis was still a threat rather than reality, indicated that three in four would consider leaving.

Greece is no stranger to emigration, but the last mass exodus of workers was in the early 1960s when the unemployment rate soared at 25 per cent. Like then, Greece faces the prospect of losing sharp minds and able bodies just as it most needs these attributes to build a more competitive and dynamic economy. *

Unemployment of 42,5% 15 to 34 year-olds

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L'Oreal heiress impaired by brain disease

Doctors say a brain disease has made L'Oreal heiress Liliane Bettencourt unable to run her affairs and she must be placed under enhanced legal guardianship, a source close to the affair said on Tuesday.

The claim came as the battle heated up between the 89-year-old billionaire and her daughter Francoise Bettencourt-Meyers, who has taken legal action alleging that her mother is prey to hangers-on who want to defraud her.

The doctors, appointed by court, submitted their report last month based on Bettencourt's medical records but did not examine her personally.

The type of "enhanced legal guardianship" recommended by the doctors would allow the appointed guardian to oversee Bettencourt's spending but falls short of granting the guardian the status of a full legal trustee.

AFP

Seeking display ad boost, Google buys Admeld

Google, bidding to boost revenue from display advertising, announced the acquisition on Monday June 13 of Admeld, a New York-based company that provides an advertising platform for publishers.

Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed but technology blog TechCrunch reported last week that the purchase price was around \$400 million (€276 million).

"We often hear from major website publishers that ad management today is still mind-numbingly complicated and inefficient," Google's vice president of display advertising Neal Mohan said in a blog post.

"We've been investing in our publisher tools to try and improve this landscape and have made great progress, but we think we can do even better," Mohan said. "To help major publishers get the most out of the rapidly changing and

growing display ad landscape, we've signed an agreement to acquire Admeld."

Mohan said Admeld has "quickly developed a great service that is helping many major publishers manage their ad space more efficiently and profitably."

"Together with Admeld, we hope to make display advertising simpler, more efficient and more valuable, provide improved support and services, and enable publishers to make more informed decisions across all their ad space."

The Mountain View, California-based Google makes most of its money from advertising tied to Internet search but is seeking to carve out a bigger slice of the growing display advertising pie.

Admeld chief executive Michael Barrett said in a blog post that the acquisition of the company by Google would be subject to regulatory review. AFP

Nestlé launches baby milk machine despite fierce criticism

The recent launch of BabyNes – a coffee machine-like system for making baby milk – has reinforced Nestlé's status as one of the world's most successful yet controversial companies.

JULIE WOLF

The company is marketing the device as “the world's first comprehensive nutrition system for infants and toddlers.” It resembles the Nespresso coffee machine, with individual capsules placed in a machine that heats water.

The machine, which prepares a bottle in less than a minute, uses six different capsules tailored to a child's weight and age. “BabyNes combines state-of-the-art technology with the utmost safety and convenience,” the company says. The machine is currently being sold only in Switzerland. Andreas von Arx, analyst with the Swiss brokerage Helvea said that, if the machine proves successful, he would expect a launch in France next year, followed by Germany and other Western European countries.

Campaigners swiftly accused the world's largest food company of undermining breastfeeding, highlighting an issue that has dogged Nestlé for over 30 years. Baby Milk Action, the UK-based organisation that is part of a global network seeking to strengthen controls on manufacturers of breast milk substitutes, said BabyNes violates international guidelines on the marketing of baby milk.

While Baby Milk Action targets all baby milk makers, its primary focus is Nestlé. The organisation continues to promote the boycott launched in the 1970s against the Swiss food company for marketing baby milk in developing countries, where mixing powdered milk with contaminated water led to illness and death. Its website offers supporters an anti-Nestlé phone ring tone in addition to more serious evidence.

Nestlé strongly denied that the new machine runs counter to World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations. “We believe that exclusive breastfeeding is the best way to feed a baby in the first six months of life and we therefore fully comply with the WHO Code of Marketing of Breast

Milk Substitutes as implemented by national governments,” a spokeswoman said. This support for breastfeeding in the first six months “and thereafter for as long as possible” features in the promotional material for BabyNes.

Priced at €202 (249 Swiss francs), with a pack of 26 capsules costing up to €45, BabyNes is aimed at the upscale market that has embraced Nespresso and its spin-offs, Dolce Gusto and Special. T. In addition to the charge that the system undermines breastfeeding, critics argue that it does not follow WHO guidance on the boiling of water to be mixed with baby milk powder.

Along with the long-running furore over baby milk formula, Nestlé has also in the past faced accusations regarding child labour in farms from which it buys cocoa beans and exploitation of cocoa and coffee farmers. Perhaps as a result, the company has in recent years stepped up its work in corporate social responsibility, including initiatives to improve sustainability of farming and combat child labour. Last year, for example, it launched a fair trade version of its Kit Kat chocolate bars.

“It is hard to imagine that George Clooney will be involved

While such controversies may tarnish the company's image among some consumers, Nestlé continues rack up business successes. A combination of modernity and tradition, also characteristic of its home country, is reflected in the way Nestlé's sleek headquarters stand out in the sleepy Swiss town of Vevey on the shores of Lake Léman.

Yet Nestlé is resolutely mul-



JEAN-CHRISTOPHE BOTT / EPA

tinational, with operations throughout the world, a Belgian chief executive officer and staff from many countries. Some see Nestlé's Swiss roots as a factor in its continued growth. “Compared with other companies, I would classify Nestlé as a bit more conservative and long-term oriented,” said Von Arx. Most of the management

team have been with Nestlé for a very long time and have embraced the company's culture and business model, which aims for steady organic growth (excluding acquisitions, exchange-rate shifts and divestments) of 5 per cent to 6 per cent a year, Von Arx said.

The company is present in most food and beverage categories with strong brands, includ-

ing such well-known names as Perrier, Häagen-Dazs, Buitoni and, of course, Nescafé. Its performance in 2010 exceeded analysts' expectations, with sales of €71.42 billion (87.9 billion Swiss francs), after revision due to changes in accounting methods.

Analysts expect organic growth of 6.2 per cent in 2011, according to Von Arx, but the stronger Swiss currency means sales will be little changed in Swiss franc terms. While the company performed particularly well in emerging markets last year, sales also continued to grow in developed countries.

It is too early to tell whether BabyNes will follow the lead of Nespresso in terms of popularity. As such machines typically sell well in the lead up to Christmas, there should be indications in the beginning of 2012.

Given sensitivities regarding the marketing of baby milk, it is hard to imagine that the company will opt for the extensive advertising that has accompanied Nespresso, and even harder to imagine that George Clooney will be involved. •

Tourism industry looks beyond Brits

LARS BEVANGER

AFTER some years of money-saving summers at home, British tourists are again flying to continental Europe this summer, a trend that could strengthen a fragile European tourism industry. Tourism is important to the beleaguered economies of Spain, Portugal and Greece – all traditional favourites with British tourists.

The return of British holidaymakers to mainland Europe should be a welcome development for Europe's tourism industry, which started showing signs of recovery late last year.

Yet the European Commission says the region needs to attract more than just British tourists to fuel that growth: “To continue its growth, Europe's tourism industry must look to the promising emerging markets of the BRIC countries [Brazil, Russia, India and China], with China as a prominent example,” a European Commission statement said.

Visits to European destinations are forecast to grow by 3.8 per cent this year, which would get them back to 2008 levels, according to UK based economics company Tourism Economics.

The EU's tourism industry provides some 10 million jobs in total and generates an estimated five per cent of the EU's GDP. A European Travel Commission report last year singled out British holidaymakers as failing the rest of Europe: “In the face of a recession and a weaker pound ster-

ling, the UK was perhaps the most disappointing European travel market in 2009 – nearly every destination experienced double-digit declines in arrivals.”

The economic crisis hit the UK economy particularly hard, and for the past three years thousands of British have been playing safe with their personal finances by holidaying at home.

The term *staycation* was invented by a clever PR person to make the prospect of cold British beaches and crowded campsites more palatable, but many Brits would rather travel south to sunnier climes if given the choice.

This year people seem to have regained enough economic confidence to book flights to other parts of Europe again. While this alone won't save Europe's tourism industry, it is significant as Brits represent one of the biggest groups tourists to visit other countries, especially in the Mediterranean region.

“We take something like 38 million foreign holidays each year, and nine out of ten of those are around the Mediterranean. So it's a very important market for those countries,” said Sean Tipton at ABTA, the British Travel Association.

“Over the last two years we've seen about a 20% fall in the number of people going abroad for their holidays. Bookings are looking healthier this year. The growth has actually come in the Eurozone – Spain and Greece in particular,” he said. •

Lloyds Banking Group about to slash 15 000 jobs

Lloyds Banking Group is looking at plans to cut as many as 15 000 jobs under an effort to slash costs by £1 billion (€1.13 billion), the Sunday Times reported.

The paper said the cuts would be part of a new company strategy to be presented on June 30 by chief executive officer Antonio Horta-Osario.

After the bank's 2008 acquisition of troubled mortgage group HBOS, Lloyds over the past two years has already reduced payrolls by some 28 000 jobs. Under a directive of the European Commission the bank is currently selling off more than 600 of its branches. DPA

Lufthansa bets big in Philippines jet servicing

Lufthansa Technik Philippines is building a €21 million hangar at Manila airport, its third to accommodate Airbus A380 – the world's biggest commercial jet. The German firm hopes to cash in on the small group of carriers that have made the first 60 orders for the 275-tonne behemoths but lack their own maintenance facilities.

Only four sites worldwide can currently service the massive jet, which has a wing span of nearly 80 metres.

Set to be completed early next year, the new facility ramps up Lufthansa's capital investment in the Philippines to about €90 million. AFP

Today's figures

€172bn

needed by Greece before 2014 according to estimates

€188m

demanded by Polish roads authority from Chinese firm COVEC for breach of contract

€245m

paid to Spyker, owner of struggling car-maker SAAB in a distribution and manufacturing deal with two Chinese companies

CULTURE

Provocation is my oxygen

A musical anarchist of epic proportions, Serge Gainsbourg continues to rattle French culture. Nina Lamparski retraces his indecent legacy.

NINA LAMPARSKI

IF I could wear Serge Gainsbourg, he would be a pair of obscenely tight leather pants, the kind that, even in 2011, would make decent folk sit up in alarm. “How rude,” they would whisper under their breath, eyes nervously darting from left to right, trying to look without getting caught, disapproving of what they had seen and yet strangely hypnotised. Swathed in a cloud of Gitanes smoke, the trousers would scandalise merely by being, cause a riot in all their vulgar glory, and get fined for disorderly conduct in public.

But, and most importantly, everybody would eventually beg to own a pair because nothing ensures soaring popularity like shock value. This seems particularly true in France, the cradle of revolution, sex affairs and chauvinism. People here cherish the bad guy the same way they “love ogres in Grimm’s fairy tales: they love to hate them,” shrewdly observes a young Gainsbourg, played by Kacey Mottet Klein, in director Joann Sfar’s 2010 biopic about the music icon.

Even 20 years after his death, the badly behaved singer-songwriter still rouses critics and fans alike. His enduring appeal as a debauched anti-hero is “emblematic of French culture,” says Dr Barbara Lebrun, a lecturer in contemporary French culture and politics at the University of Manchester. “I don’t want to emphasise a stereotypical view but we do enjoy a provocateur, someone who is anti-establishment and isn’t afraid to go against conventions. Gainsbourg was well aware of that and constructed a carefully-engineered persona who created songs for public consumption.”

Undeniably, Lucien Ginsburg, as he was named at birth, gave the greedy masses plenty of fodder to keep the gossip mill spinning throughout his lifetime. Born in 1928 to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents in Paris, the compulsive troublemaker, drinker and womaniser repeatedly professed his disdain for conventions. “Provocation is my oxygen,” he famously declared before going on to tell American singer Whitney Houston on live television in 1984 that he would “like to fuck” her.

A few years earlier, the Rock Around the Bunker album, featuring tracks about SS soldiers dancing in drag queen outfits on the Night of the Long Knives, had mortified the politically correct. They failed to understand that black humour was the artist’s way of dealing with the suffering he and his family had endured during the Nazi occupation of France. His 1979 reggae version of the country’s national anthem *La Marseillaise* earned him bomb threats from right-wing groups, and he

“Beneath all the layers of decadence hid a haunted, deeply-insecure man

narrowly escaped getting beaten up by paratroopers after he flipped a bird at them onstage at the end of a concert.

Then, of course, there were Gainsbourg’s much-publicised steamy love affairs with some of the century’s sexiest women, including the phenomenally-sultry Brigitte Bardot, for whom he wrote the salacious *Je T’aime... Moi Non Plus*. The song, released in 1969 in a sigh-drenched orgasmic duet with his post-Bardot lover Jane Birkin, offended and enthralled the world in equal measures. Despite becoming a number one hit across Europe, its explicit content saw it banned from numerous radio stations including the BBC. The Vatican reportedly went as far as to excommunicate the record executive who released the sinful single in Italy.

The only scandal to top the rather catchy intercourse simulation was the whimsical *Lemon Incest* performed with Gainsbourg’s then 12-year-old daughter Charlotte in the mid-1980s. Craftily constructed around a wordplay on incest, the song’s video showed the skimpily-clad girl stretched out on a bed with her shirtless father, chirping about “the love that we will never make together.” Needless to say, if the media had smelt blood before, they now went in for the kill and lynched Gainsbourg in damning headlines. Perversely, the frenzied witch-hunt proved an excellent free marketing campaign leading to soaring album sales.

One could be forgiven for assuming that Gainsbourg’s decadence and self-destructive excesses (“If I don’t get drunk, life becomes impossible”) would have made him a vilified outcast in ruling circles. And yet, thanks to his creative genius, the

opposite was true. When the *enfant terrible* died of a heart attack in 1991 at the age of 62, a clearly emotional President Mitterrand described him as “our Baudelaire, our Apollinaire [who has] elevated song to the level of art”. This would be the same “Baudelaire” who burned a 500 franc note down to a quarter on live television to demonstrate what remained of his income after paying the high French taxes.

Deconstructing the iconoclastic giant is no easy task. As Dutch novelist and music expert Bart Patenga writes in his essay *The Rascal as Cultural Provocateur*, Gainsbourg remains a “complex cultural homunculus” – “As king of kink, he wore his crown one day, pissed on it the next.”

In a sense, this is how Gainsbourg must have felt about France: a lover and nemesis at the same time. Referring to the yellow star he was forced to wear during the Nazi occupation, he described the experience as being “branded with a red-hot iron”.

“Even at 13, I had already become an outsider, because the tough guy thing wasn’t me,” he was quoted as saying in Sylvie Simmons’ biography, *Serge Gainsbourg: A Fistful of Gitanes*. Gainsbourg’s way of dealing with his country was to go on a lyrical rampage. He conquered the nation and settled scores through grabbing the French language “by the balls” – as he frequently said.

No matter what the anarchic poet did to rattle his entourage, his actions were not driven by scorn or contempt for others but rather by a burning wish not to be forgotten. Beneath all the layers of decadence hid a haunted, deeply-insecure man. “He wanted people to love him, it wasn’t that he was spitting in their face – he wanted to attract their attention by shocking them,” observes film director Sfar.

Although the icon sat in the opposite corner of more “digestible” musicians like George Brassens and Léo Ferré, he certainly earned his peers’ respect. Comparing Gainsbourg to an erotomaniac singer-songwriter during a televised round table, Ferré commented, “I love erotomaniacs because I’m not one myself.”

In death, the legend’s colossal legacy continues to live on in many shapes, including a new generation of singers. One young man to watch in particular is Benjamin Biolay, an arrogant dandy and ex-husband of Catherine Deneuve’s daughter, whose gravelly voice and ironic texts have led to him being hailed as the next Gainsbourg. At the end, the beauty of Gainsbourg lies in the unattainability of his myth. As Sfar says, “I’m not interested in Gainsbourg’s truths; I’m interested in his lies”. For my part, I think it’s essential to have a pair of tight leather trousers in my wardrobe. It raises the possibility that God, after all, as Gainsbourg sang with Catherine Deneuve, might indeed be a smoker of Havanas. •



UNIVERSAL

Europe's top six bestsellers

The top six books sold across Europe

in the first quarter of 2011, according to German book trade analyst Rüdiger Wischenbart.

1

Tatiana De Rosnay
France/UK
Sarah's Key



2

Jussi Adler-Olsen
Denmark
Mercy



3

Ken Follett
UK
Fall of Giants



- 4.....Stieg Larsson
Sweden
The Girl Who Played with Fire
- 5.....Katherine Pancol
France
The Squirrels of Central Park Are Sad on Mondays
- 6.....Stephanie de Meyer
USA
Breaking Dawn

Orphans of photography

“To be Hungarian,” said the Budapest-born writer Arthur Koestler, “is a collective neurosis.” Maybe so, but, as a forthcoming exhibition in London shows, these neurotics make great photographers.

NINA CAPLAN

Perhaps it is the loneliness of the orphan: the Magyars float amid Europe's Latins, Slavs and Saxons. All dialogue with their neighbours is complicated by the fact that nobody else speaks Hungarian or anything remotely resembling it (the closest linguistic relative is apparently Finnish – and it isn't very close). Then there is a century of political upheaval, from the crumbling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the brutal hacking of Hungarian territory after World War I to the incursions of the USSR, via a right-wing regime whose virulent anti-Semitism deprived the country of Gyula Halász, Andor Kohn, Márton Mermelstein, László Weisz and Endre Friedmann, and instead gave the world Brassai, André Kertész, Martin Munkácsi, László Moholy-Nagy and Robert Capa.

With the exception of Capa, whose English nonetheless remained so flawed that his friends referred to his speech as “Capanese,” these name changes blurred their owners' Jewish origins but left their Hungarian identity visible. Their pictures did the same.

The made-up names are the ones we know: they are the stars of the Royal Academy's upcoming show *Eyewitness: Hungarian Photography in the Twentieth Century*. They are the vis-

ible tip of a phenomenal Hungarian diaspora: from the 1920s until the end of Communism, if you turned over a rock in any part of the industry you were likely to find at least one Hungarian scurrying busily beneath it.

Capa once remarked that to take great photographs “it's not enough to have talent, you also have to be Hungarian.” He was exaggerating – a little: someone had to stick up for the place, and who better than the world's greatest war photographer, a man ejected from his own wounded nation yet compelled for the rest of his short life to document the injuries inflicted elsewhere? Capa's tremendous war pho-

“It's not enough to have talent, you have to be Hungarian”

tographs covered five conflicts in 18 years, until a landmine in Indochina exacted the price for his dictum that if your pictures aren't good enough, you aren't close enough; the only trouble he remained keen to avoid was back home. (He died in 1954; would he have been tempted to go back to cover the failed 1956 revolution? Budapest



RUDOLF BALOGH, SHEPHERD WITH HIS DOGS, HORTOBÁGY © HUNGARIAN MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

could have done with him then).

Others internalised the conflicts they had fled and did not look back. Their influence dances through modern photography – reportage, photojournalism, fine art, even fashion – with

a lightness that belies their history. That may have been another part of photography's allure: after all, images exist in an eternal present. In the most literal sense, photography reverses the negative, and Kertész's experiments with distortion or Moholy-Nagy's with form could be seen as playing with that possibility. So could the exuberant

fresh-air fashion shoots of Munkácsi, a star sports photographer in Hungary and Germany whose work for Harper's Bazaar transformed American fashion journalism; or the magic wreaked by the lonely Brassai on the night streets of Paris.

Yet there are also many names in this exhibition that most of us won't know: Károly Escher, Olga Máté, József Pécsi. These are the non-Jews, who could stay and did: the Hungarians who put up with the Germans and then the Russians so they could carry on talking to the only people in the world who could understand them. They are far better than their international obscurity might suggest, and most seem, like their exiled brethren, particularly interested in capturing motion, although presumably for different reasons: an eternal present must have been a har-

rowing notion for those trapped under Admiral Horthy's dictatorship in the 1930s, or immured in Soviet-occupied territory later. Just look at Escher's bathing banker, fatly smiling at our resentful gaze: an ordinary Hungarian in that interwar period could have been forgiven for identifying more with the water than with the man in it. There is no strenuous way to float.

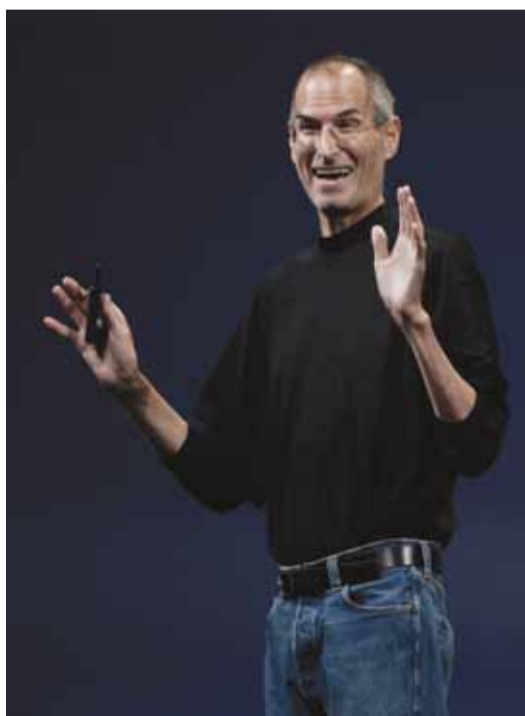
Hungary's particular linguistic and historical problems have been as beneficial to photography as they have been cruel to the Hungarians. Both exiles and homebodies have been driven by the question: how can those silenced protest? And they have answered – indirectly. They photograph others' wars, like Capa, or juggle with abstraction, like Moholy-Nagy, or bend light to remind us of the distance between truth and beauty (“I write with light,” Kertész said).

At home, they seek out the individuality that is the eternal pebble in the authoritarian shoe: the wandering wimples of Ernő Vadas's procession of nuns, or Pécsi's laughing model curled smoking before stiffly upright mannequins. To see what they were up against, consider that the best known photographs of 1956 are all of Soviet tanks rolling in to crush the uprising. To understand what they chose to do about it, take a look at this exhibition. •

“Eyewitness: Hungarian Photography in the Twentieth Century” is on show at the Royal Academy, London, from 30 June to 2 October.

royalacademy.org.uk

Steve Jobs comic book to hit shops in August



MONICA M. DAVEY/EPA

The life of Apple visionary Steve Jobs will be told in a comic book to be released in August by the studio that did the same with the story of Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg.

“His story, and that of Apple, is epic,” Bluewater Productions president Darren Davis said of Jobs.

“His innovations command front page news, speculation of his health affects the stock market,” Davis said. “Not bad for a college dropout.”

The 32-page comic book will be available in real-world bookstores and at online shops such as Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble and Borders, according to a release issued Monday by Bluewater.

Impetus to publish *Steve Jobs: Co-founder of Apple* came from the success of Bluewater's comic book biography of Zuckerberg, the publisher said.

The Zuckerberg comic sold-out and Bluewater is to release a graphic novel version of the Facebook co-founder's story in September.

“There are definitely some similarities between Zuckerberg and Jobs,” said Bluewater writer CW Cooke.

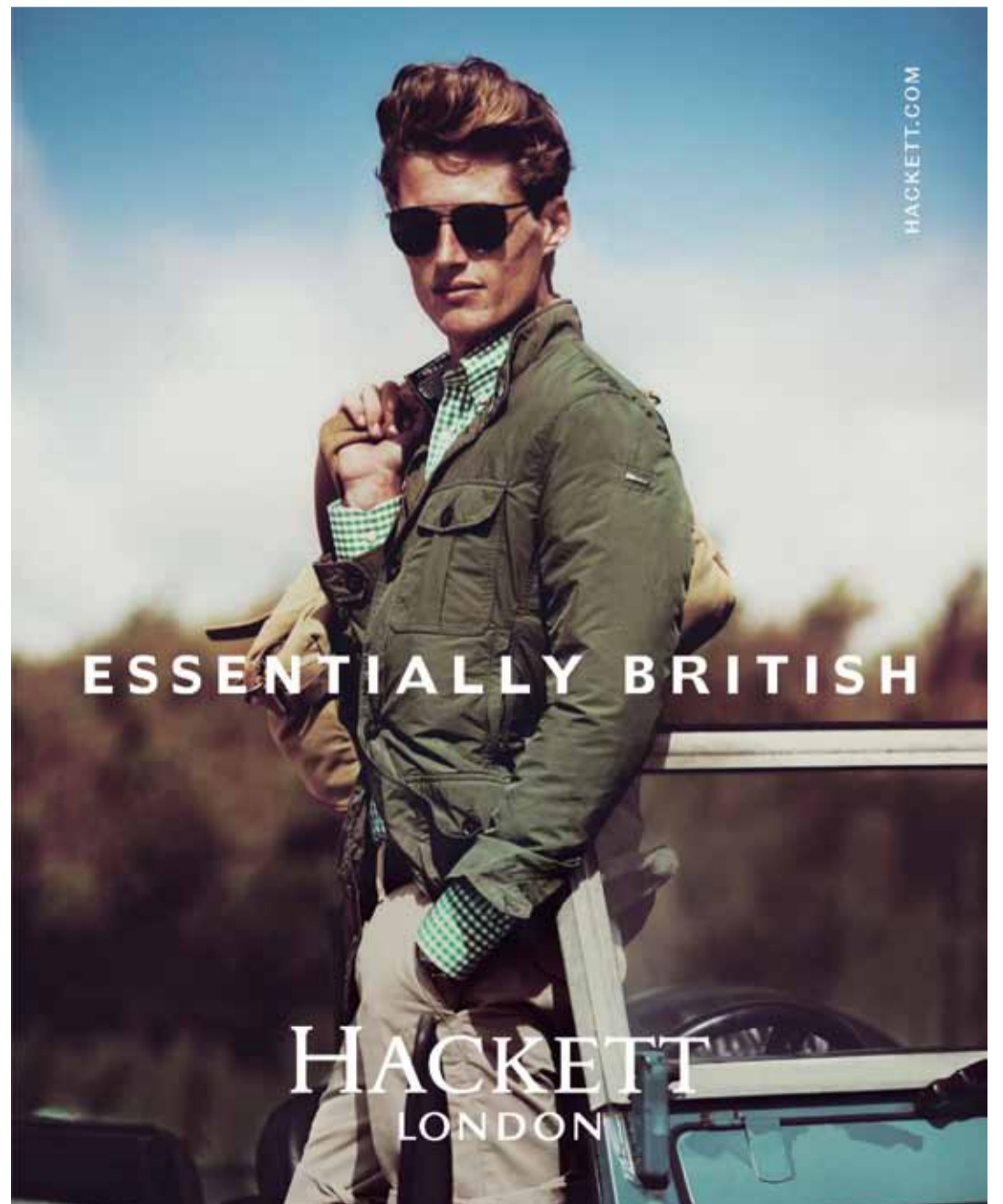
“The idea behind both efforts is to show the person behind the personality and that it is never what you'd expect,” the writer said.

A biography of Jobs title *iSteve: The Book of Jobs* written by former Time magazine managing editor Walter Isaacson is to be released as a book next year and has logged strong pre-orders at Amazon.

The book, the first authorised biography of the technology visionary behind the Macintosh computer, the iPod, the iPhone and iPad, is to be released on 6 March 2012. AFP

Don't miss:
ART Basel,
15-19 June 2011

Some 60 000 art-lovers attend Art Basel – the world's premier international art show for modern and contemporary works – every year. This 42nd edition will feature nearly 300 leading galleries from North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. More than 2500 artists, ranging from the great masters of modern art to emerging talents, are represented in the show's multiple sections. The exhibition includes the highest-quality paintings, sculptures, drawings, installations, photographs and audiovisual works.



SPORT

Europe set to remain atop tennis throne at Wimbledon

Europeans enjoy courtside dominance on the international tennis circuit at the moment, at the top of the rankings as well as in the wider field. Wimbledon, which starts Monday, is bound to confirm the trend.

JONAS ARNESEN

Anything but a European victory in the men's single in this year's third Grand Slam would be a major upset.

Of the last 30 Grand Slams, 28 have been won by Europeans, and although this is primarily the work of two men, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, their superiority only consolidates Europe's position as a tennis powerhouse.

First the wider field: Europeans account for 75 of the top 100 women tennis players and 72 of the top 100 men.

Then the top tier: the latest rankings have 17 Europeans among the top 20 in both the men's and women's rankings.

The US? Despite huge economic muscle, the former tennis superpower is on the decline. The factors behind Europe's triumphs are also the factors responsible for the US downswing. While clay courts are a breeding ground for most European juniors, their American competitors hardly ever set foot on the surface.

Although this has always been the case, Americans used to be disadvantaged only on clay. For

a good while however, the game in general has become more sluggish – mainly due to heavier balls – and those who have mastered the art of the long rally now enjoy an advantage on all playing surfaces against those who lack this strategic skill set.

The advantage held by clay specialists now also applies to the grass courts of Wimbledon, where a power serve is still an asset, but where the overall game is so slow that a serve and volley game is an unfavourable tactic.

That style of play is regrettably disappearing altogether, and if tennis's decision makers do not act swiftly to curb that development, tennis fans worldwide will have to wait for generations for the game that John McEnroe, Stefan Edberg, Patrick Rafter and Tim Henman made into an art form.

Seven years have passed since Andy Roddick's triumph at the US Open, the most recent American Grand Slam triumph in the men's singles. The fact that the 29-year-old veteran is the great American hope to end this historical drought should



Spain's Rafael Nadal during the men's singles final at Wimbledon, 2010.

FELIPE TRUEBA / EPA

not only be seen as praise for his game.

The downward slide is even more remarkable against the backdrop of the US Tennis Association's comparatively strong finances, drawn from the vast profits generated by the US Open.

In 1990 the US occupied two of the top five spots on the ranking and 23 of the top one hundred.

Today, there is not a single American in the top five, and a

mere nine in the top one hundred.

The date 9 May this year marked the first day since 1973, when the ranking system was introduced, that the US did not have a single player among the top ten on either the ATP or WTA rankings.

Serena Williams would certainly have been among the top ten women had it not been for the foot injury that has kept her out of play for nearly a year.

If she has made a good recov-

ery, Williams will be one of the major favourites at Wimbledon, where she is the reigning champion.

The fact that Williams, ranked 25 in the world, is the highest ranked American only serves to illustrate the serious growth problems in US tennis.

China, meanwhile, has two players among the top twenty, and no less than 116 million Chinese viewers tuned in as Na Li took this year's French

Open, the country's first Grand Slam. This suggests that the Chinese tennis boom anticipated by many ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics is now set to begin.

But for the time being, king Rafael Nadal and queen Caroline Wozniacki ensure European reign in the tennis world. •

Jonas Arnesen is Tennis Reporter at Svenska Dagbladet in Sweden.

Sport today

JAMES LAWTON

The stench of FIFA that won't go away



Wherever you go, maybe to an obscure Caribbean island or to once mighty Italy, it seems that the football air is tainted.

In Italy, where betting orientated match-fixing allegations

have resurrected the horrors of the Calciopoli scandal of five years ago, one of the embattled accused, Giuseppe Signori of Lazio, might have been for a moment the spokesman for so much of the world's game when he pleaded, "Have some mercy, I can't say anything. I will meet my lawyer."

At least Signori, a prolific goalscorer in his time, might be able to warm himself on the memory of old heroics. What is the redemption for Sepp Blatter, elected by acclamation to

another four-year term as president of Fifa, an organisation which after 13 years of his rule increasingly resembles a honeycomb of manipulation and corruption?

It is – and this is something of a concession from the 75-old Swiss who so recently was declaring, "Crisis! What crisis?" – to drive out the devils he now says are inevitably attracted to the huge cash flows he has created so spectacularly during his reign.

Many hard-headed observers

say the only appropriate reaction to this project is despair. Fifa, after all, is a body beyond the force of governments and, increasingly it seems, of conscience.

It is a world of its own, a realm moulded over the years by Blatter's political skill and, some say, his bleakly acute awareness of human nature.

The English FA has been widely scorned, even by critics of Fifa, for its lonely stand against Blatter's unopposed re-election and the late blos-

soming charges of corruption in the 2018 World Cup bidding process.

The charge is of hypocrisy; that the allegations would not have surfaced if the English bid had been successful. Others have spoken of naivety while advocating reform from within. But then where does the naivety begin and end with Blatter's erstwhile opponent, Mohamed bin Hamman, and former ally Jack Warner of Trinidad, facing mushrooming charges of voter seduction?

For now there can be just two short-term hopes. One is that sponsors like Adidas will continue to voice their disquiet – and apply the most meaningful pressure. The other is that Fifa will revoke the corruption-riddled decision to take the World Cup to the desert enclave of Qatar in 2022. Neither move would automatically announce the reform of Fifa. But then, it would alleviate some of the stench. •

James Lawton writes for The Independent in London.

GOLF

Englishmen top contenders at US Open

Thursday sees the start of the US Open Golf Championships in Bethesda, Maryland. The second major of the year will not feature golf's most famous player, Tiger Woods, who notably announced his decision not to play via Twitter.

Among the favourites for the title are Englishmen Luke Donald and Lee Westwood, the number one and two in the world, despite neither of them ever winning any of the four major tournaments. American veteran Phil Mickelson is another potential winner on Sunday. That would mean his first title at the US Open. DPA

FOOTBALL

UEFA officials say Poland is ready for Euro 2012 despite delays

Poland will be ready to host Euro 2012 despite delays in building infrastructure needed for the tournament, Polish and UEFA officials confirmed.

The National Stadium in Warsaw will be ready by November 30, Prime Minister Donald Tusk said. This includes a five-month delay in construction caused by faulty stairs. The stadium was supposed to be built by June 30.

Tusk's announcement came amid reports from an audit office that there were serious delays in building stadiums and remodeling railway stations needed for the tournament. DPA

The report, released Tuesday by the Supreme Audit Office, said that key roads totalling some 400 kilometres would not be ready in time to ease travel for fans.

But visiting UEFA officials in Warsaw said that they were not worried about stadium delays.

Sports Minister Adam Giersz said stadiums in all four Polish host cities would be ready well in advance of Euro 2012.

Euro 2012 will take place at four venues each in Poland and co-hosting Ukraine, with Warsaw hosting the opener on 8 June and Kiev the final on 1 July. DPA

The ABC of the 2011 Tour de France: anyone but Contador

RICHARD MOORE

FOR the organisers, fans and many of the riders of the Tour de France a dark sense of foreboding accompanies the usual anticipation of the race. The Grand Départ, in the Vendée, is a little over two weeks away, and Alberto Contador, the three-time winner and defending champion, has confirmed that he intends to ride.

The Spaniard will start as favourite. But if he wins then it could plunge the Tour into a crisis even more serious than that of 2006, when the winner, Floyd Landis, was stripped of the title after testing positive for testosterone.

Contador tested positive for clenbuterol during last year's Tour, but, almost a year on, the case remains unresolved. By an all-too-predictable quirk of fate, it will be decided by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in a hearing that gets underway

planned towards the end of the Tour were minute, but, by a strict reading of the rules, that should be immaterial: there is no minimum threshold of a drug that boosts aerobic capacity, and can act as a potent performance-enhancer.

The Spaniard's defence, from the day the positive test was confirmed, on September 30, is that he inadvertently ingested clenbuterol by eating contaminated beef. The Spanish Cycling Federation, charged with prosecuting the case, initially banned him for a year on January 26; then they reversed that decision, accepting the contaminated beef explanation and exonerating him on February 14.

Contador was free to return to racing. But, finally - on the thirtieth and final day available to lodge an appeal - the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) appealed the Spanish federa-



HORACIO VILLALOBOS / EPA

eight days after the Tour starts. If it goes against Contador, he will be stripped of last year's title and - if he wins - this year's. His name will also be expunged as the winner of this year's Giro d'Italia.

The echoes of 2006 do not end with the possibility of the final result being rewritten just days after the finish in Paris. Five years ago, the Tour got underway beneath a cloud of suspicion. "Avis de tempête" (Storm warning) read the front page of L'Equipe, the French sports daily, 24 hours before the start, when the favourites, Ivan Basso and Jan Ullrich, were sent home for their involvement in a blood doping ring.

This time, the storm has been slowly building for a year. And, with Tour director Christian Prudhomme admitting there is nothing he can do to prevent Contador's participation, dark clouds are set to hover over cycling's flagship event, casting the Tour in a shadow that can only undermine the credibility it has been desperately seeking to restore since the scandal-ravaged years of 2006 and 2007.

The wheels of justice have turned unusually slowly in a case that has been as complex as it has been controversial. The traces of clenbuterol detected in four of Contador's urine sam-

plions towards the end of the Tour were minute, but, by a strict reading of the rules, that should be immaterial: there is no minimum threshold of a drug that boosts aerobic capacity, and can act as a potent performance-enhancer.

tion's decision to sport's highest arbiter, the CAS. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) followed suit. The appeal was originally scheduled to be heard before the Tour, but the "complexities of the case," coupled with pressure from Contador's lawyers, pushed it back to after the Tour. While the appeal is pending, Contador has been free to race.

Bradley Wiggins, who on Sunday won the Critérium du Dauphiné, told AFP that "it is not a good thing that a bloke who tested positive four times is in the race. It is also bad for all those teams that are fighting to be clean as is the case with my team, Sky."

Marc Madiot, manager of the Française des Jeux team, urged Contador to consider his position: "[Contador] can say, 'This is perhaps not a good idea to go because I am in a delicate situation.'"

But, speaking last week, Contador seemed less concerned about ethical questions than with his physical condition after winning the Giro. There is a sense, as some are beginning to realise, of Contador and the Tour sleepwalking towards another credibility-shredding disaster. Privately, the organisers may be whispering ABC: anyone but Contador. •

SPOTLIGHT

Women's World Cup

The 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup takes place at nine venues in Germany between 26 June and 17 July. Sixteen teams are competing for the cup in the sixth instalment of the tournament. The German hosts are reigning champions.



EPA

The German team after beating Brasil 2-0 in the final of the 2007 Football World Cup in China.

World Cup boosting popularity but gap to men remains wide

BRIAN HOMEWOOD

THE famous English football writer Brian Glanville likens it to watching an under-15 game and FIFA president Sepp Blatter once said that it needed skimpier player outfits to make it more interesting.

Women's football has come on in leaps and bounds over the last few years as a participants sport, yet, as those comments show, it still struggles to attract sponsors and TV airtime. The four-yearly World Cup in Germany, starting June 26, is a rare exception. Stadiums are expected to be packed and games will be beamed live to dozens of countries.

Sixteen teams will take part, including five from Europe - Germany, France, England, Sweden and Norway. As hosts, back-to-back champions Germany are clear favourites although the United States, also two-time former winners, is the top-ranked team. Brazil, who boasts the world's top player in Marta, will be trying to win a major tournament for the first time.

More than 70 per cent of the 900 000 tickets available had already been sold by the end of last month and 80 000 people are expected at Berlin's Olympiastadion alone.

Matches will also be played in Dresden,

Augsburg, Sinsheim, Frankfurt, Bochum, Leverkusen, Mönchengladbach and Wolfsburg, as organisers concentrate on venues that missed out on the men's World Cup in 2006.

For those who haven't watched it, women's football is generally free of the histrionics that have become part and parcel of the men's game. Brazil is considered an exception to this and bad feeling bubbles under the surface when they play. The sight of Brazilian players celebrating a red card for an opponent at the last World Cup certainly did not endear them to the other teams.

Controversy also surrounds the presence of Equatorial Guinea, the lowest-ranked team in the tournament. World Soccer magazine reported that during the African qualifying competition the Equatoguineans had been flying in Brazilian players to play for them in home games and that the Confederation of African Football (CAF) had been turning a blind eye. Nigeria also accused them of fielding two men in their team, something which was angrily denied by the Western African country.

FIFA has since announced guidelines for what it calls gender verification, and says it will be up to the teams "to ensure the

correct gender of all players by actively investigating any perceived deviation in secondary sex characteristics and keeping complete documentation of the findings." Tests will only be carried out if an opponent or FIFA official suspects an irregularity, however any team making "unfounded or irresponsible" accusations could itself face sanctions.

While there is every reason to believe that this year's world cup will be a success, it will not mean that women's football will catch on as a spectator sport.

England is staging its first semi-professional women's league this season and that could prove a much more reliable indication of the sport's commercial future.

Television is not kind to women's football, exposing the lack of pace and dynamism compared to the men's game in a way which does not happen with women's tennis and athletics. Goalkeeping is the most obvious weakness, with too many soft goals scored from long-range shots or crosses.

For the time being, women's soccer is thriving as a participants' sport with standards constantly improving. Making it a commercial success outside the World Cup is a different proposition altogether. •

"Women's football is less depraved"

The European Daily (ED) interviews Monika Staab (MS). Staab has represented the German national team and is now a successful coach. Recently she has worked to promote women's football in places such as Pakistan and Bahrain.

ED: Since 1991 only three countries - Norway, Germany and the United States - have managed to clinch the World Cup. Do you believe we will see a new champion in this year's women's tournament?

MS: I don't think so. I prefer not to compare, but in men's football the overall standard of the game is higher. On the women's side, looking at this year's World Cup it's easy to predict that at least one of Brazil, Germany or the United States will make it to the final.

ED: What are the reasons for the difference in standard between men and women's football?

MS: First of all, men's football has been around for 150 years now, and women's football for only 41 years. Secondly, in women's football the impact of a single player is still much greater. Players like Germany's Birgit Prinz or Brazil's Marta

can dominate, and make or break the whole team.

ED: Why go and see a women's match instead of a men's match?

MS: Personally, I think there is still an innocent quality to the women's game. The flow of money in men's football is just too great. If you work in women's football you do it out of passion, fun and conviction.

ED: In 2022, the Men's World Cup is hosted by Qatar. When will we see the first Women's World Cup in the Arab World?

MS: I don't think we are too far away from that. The Qatari and Iraqi Women's teams played their first international games just recently. In Bahrain, where I coached the national team, we also played internationals. I see progress and growing acceptance in these countries. Saudi-Arabia is the only country where the national football association bars women from playing. But we mustn't forget that giving the World Cup to Qatar opened the door for women.

ED: You have already been to more than 50

countries promoting women's football. What do you think about the long-term effects of your work there? Do you think your short-term stays are helpful?

MS: I was in Bahrain for six months and helped build up the national team. After that other countries started showing interest. So I spent four months in Pakistan, where I put together their national team. The country used to have only seven teams, but that number has grown to 42, with their own league structure.

The long-term impact of my efforts depends on the respective football associations and on how serious they are about changing women's football.

I usually assess the situation when I arrive and follow that up with recommendations. The association then has to do its homework, before I come back to check up on what they've done. If they haven't changed anything there is nothing we can do about it. Ironically, if the women end up being more successful than the men, funding may immediately be stopped, as was the case in Bahrain. Suddenly we weren't even allowed to practice.

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